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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the outcomes of a 1996-1997 review that investigated the current role of Learning Assistance Services in the delivery of special education support services to students in 115 British Columbia public schools and the students who receive these services. Learning Assistance Services are described as school-based, non-categorical resource services designed to support classroom teachers and their students who have mild to moderate difficulties in learning and adjustment. The study also examined the impact of Individual Education Plan (IEP) requirements on students' educational programs, parent participation, and teachers' workloads. Findings include: (1) there is a significant variation in how sample school districts and schools set out policies and procedures to govern the provision of Learning Assistance Services; (2) in many cases, policies/procedures guidelines are somewhat dated and do not appear to reflect the significant changes that have occurred relative the to provision of Learning Assistance Services; and (3) the Learning Assistance Program tends to be more oriented to "pull-out" and Learning Assistance Center programs in secondary schools than in elementary schools. Appendices include the rationale for the learning assistance reviews, the school survey, interview questions, ministry learning assistance guidelines, and supplemental reports that expand on findings. (CR)

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REVIEW OF LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES REPORT (1997)

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Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

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Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

INTRODUCTION

Learning Assistance Services are described by the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training as school-based, non-categorical resource services designed to support classroom teachers and their students who have mild to moderate difficulties in learning and adjustment.

In 1995-1996 the Ministry issued a major revision to Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. In addition, the Individual Educational Plan Order (MO638/95) was implemented and set out the requirement for the development and maintenance of IEP's for all students receiving supplemental special education services where such services are provided for fifteen (15) or more hours in a given school year.

The Minister of Education, Skills and Training recently announced that a review of Learning Assistance Services would be conducted in the current school year (1996-1997). The stated purpose of the review was to determine and describe the current role of Learning Assistance in the delivery of special education support services to students in British Columbia's public schools and the students who receive these services. The study was also to examine the impact of Individual Education Plan (IEP) requirements on students' educational programs, parent participation and teachers' workloads.

The Special Programs Branch of the Ministry advised school districts that the review would :

1. **provide a current "snapshot" of Learning Assistance Services;**
2. **assist the Ministry in its ongoing review of provincial special education policy and guidelines;**
3. **assist the educational partners in discussing and addressing current and emerging issues in the delivery of Learning Assistance Services and;**
4. **provide current information upon which to build support for "best practice" strategies.**

The Special Programs Branch was assisted in the development of the review by an Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from the following key partner groups:

- British Columbia School Trustees' Association
- British Columbia School Superintendents' Association
- British Columbia Principals' and Vice Principals' Association
- British Columbia Teachers' Federation
- British Columbia Teachers' Federation - Learning Assistance
- Teachers Association (PSA)
- British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
- British Columbia Council of Administrators of Special Education
- University of British Columbia

In accordance with established criteria and a Request For Proposal Process,

Desharnais and Associates were engaged to conduct the review and to structure the review in order to answer key research questions set out by the Advisory Committee :

1. **In the sampled schools, what are current school district policies regarding the delivery of Learning Assistance Services ?**
2. **Which students receive Learning Assistance Services ?**
3. **What is the nature of the Learning Assistance Services currently provided in B.C. schools ?**
4. **How are Learning Assistance Services documented and how is information about student progress conveyed ?**
5. **What is known about the efficacy of Learning Assistance Services ?**

School districts were further advised that the review would provide a vehicle for school districts to better understand and refine the nature of district practices related to the delivery of Learning Assistance Services and that the review would yield valuable information to the larger special education community.

PROJECT PURPOSE

- To conduct a review of Learning Assistance Services through the collection of data/information from a stratified sample survey of twenty-nine (29) school districts and two hundred and two (202) schools covering five regions of the province.
- To supplement the survey information through visitations to ten (10) school districts conducting structured :
    - **School visits/interviews (30 schools)**
    - **Interviews with District Office administrative personnel (10 meetings)**
    - **Meetings with Learning Assistance Teachers/Regular Classroom Teachers (10 meetings)**
    - **Meetings with Parents of Learning Assistance students (10 meetings).**
- To conduct a thorough review and analysis of all data/information relative to the key research questions.
- To examine and identify potential implications related to emerging patterns or trends, service delivery similarities or variations, human resource demands.

APPROACH / SCOPE

- The consultant was requested to organize and manage a process for data collection and field visits / field-work meetings and interviews involving a stratified sample of schools representing each of the five regions of the province and involving two hundred and two (202) schools. The process was to take into consideration that the participation of school districts and schools in the provision of the data was to be on a voluntary and confidential basis.
    - The consultant met with Special Programs Branch staff and the

Advisory Committee to the project to review and finalize :

- project timelines
- key research questions and data requirements
- the stratified sample / framework developed by the consultant (draft)
- the survey / questionnaire instrument developed by the consultant (draft)
- the project 'rationale' developed by the consultant (draft)
- the draft letters developed by the consultant to be sent out to districts and schools:
    - those with schools to be surveyed
    - those with schools to be surveyed and who would also participate in the field-work component.
- the field-work plan and schedule including the structured meeting and interview formats developed by the consultant (draft).

The consultant(s) then completed the following tasks :

- produced the print-ready School Survey - Learning Assistance Services for distribution by the Special Programs Branch.
- arranged for 10 LA teachers to review the survey instrument in terms of " workability " or response " feasibility ".
- produced the communication packages to be distributed to the districts and schools by the Special Programs Branch (letters, rationale, school lists, visitation schedules).
- contacted Superintendents to arrange field visits (school visits, interviews, meetings) (telephone & fax).
- arranged for the distribution of letters, survey forms and lists of sampled schools to participating (identified) districts (29).
- provided consultation and advice to districts/schools related to survey form completion.
- conducted field visits to ten (10) school districts in five regions (30 schools).
- compiled field-work information for analysis.
- collected survey data from all participating school districts.
- processed all available data/information and produced data reports for conducting analysis.
- developed an analytical framework in order to analyze the data across a number of domains.

METHODOLOGY

1. A survey sample (stratified) was conducted accordingly :
    - With a desired target of 100 school survey returns it was decided to survey 202 schools from the five regions of the province.
    - From a list of school district populations by region supplied by the Special Programs Branch, districts in each region were selected by size within the region (small; mid-size; larger).
    - The number of schools to be surveyed in each region were selected proportionally according to student population . . . ie., the regional student population in relation to the overall/provincial

student population with the percentage (%) yielding the percentage (%) of the 202 schools to be surveyed overall :

$$\frac{\text{Regional Pop.}}{\text{Provincial Pop.}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of 202 Schools (provincial)}$$

- The number of schools to be surveyed in each selected district within each region was determined proportionally according to each district's student population as a percentage (%) of the total student population of the selected districts in the region yielding the percentage (%) of the total number of schools to be surveyed in the region, which then yields the number of schools to be surveyed in each school district :

$$\frac{\text{District Pop.}}{\text{Selected Regional Districts Pop.}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of Schools (regional)}$$

- From the list of schools by district with school populations supplied by the Special Programs Branch (Public and Independent Schools Book - 1995) schools were selected by size and type.

SCHOOL SURVEY - LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

SAMPLE (OVERVIEW)

Regions (5) :

1. Kootenay
2. Okanagan-Cariboo
3. Lower Mainland / Coast
4. Vancouver Island
5. North

School Districts (29) :

- Small School Districts (9)
- Mid-Size School Districts (11)
- Larger School Districts (9)

Schools (202) :

- Small Schools - Elementary (45)
- Small Schools - Secondary (8)
- Mid-Size Schools - Elementary (57)
- Mid-Size Schools - Secondary (23)
- Larger Schools - Elementary (30)
- Larger Schools - Secondary (39)

Total 202

2. A data collection package was developed and approved for distribution to the 29 school districts selected for the sample. The Special Programs Branch sent out these packages on May 15 - 19 with a return date deadline of June 20. This package contained :

    - Letter to Superintendent of Schools from the Director of the Special Programs Branch announcing the review , providing pertinent details and seeking cooperation and participation in the study (copies to Board Chairpersons and to education partner groups represented on the Advisory Committee) (Refer to Appendix 1).

    - Letter to Superintendent of Schools from the Consultant announcing the review, providing pertinent details, and seeking cooperation and participation in the study and providing a list of schools to be surveyed in the district and where applicable, (10 districts) providing detailed information about planned field-work in the district by the consultant(s) .... (copies to school principals and Board Chairpersons) (Refer to Appendix 1).

    - Rationale for the collection of survey data and field information. (See Appendix 2).

    - School Surveys - Learning Assistance Services (for schools to be surveyed) with completion instructions and survey return information. (See Appendix 3).

    - In those districts participating in the field-work component of the review (10), Superintendents were contacted in mid- May by telephone to finalize arrangements for the field visits (interviews, meetings; locations, times, announcements). Immediate follow-up by fax was undertaken (copy of package coming to the district from the Special Programs Branch).

4. Field Visits were conducted in ten (10) school districts (May 25 - June 6) :

    - visits to 30 schools (3 in each district)... on-site structured discussion/interview with LA Teacher (s) and Administrators (78 participants)..... some discussions with students (10-15) related to their perceptions of the service provided, whether they had IEP's and whether they found these helpful, whether they liked coming to the LA Center.

    - structured interviews with Superintendent and /or district special

programs administrator (s) (10 districts) (16 participants).

- structured meetings open to LA Teachers and Regular Classroom Teachers (10 districts) (138 participants).

- structured meetings open to parents of Learning Assistance Students (10 districts) (146 participants).

(Please refer to Appendix 4 for Meeting/Interview Question Formats)

5. A total of **115 schools** returned completed survey forms by June 20/97. This constitutes a **57% rate of return**.

LIMITATIONS OF THE REVIEW

The review has been subject to a number of limitations :

- Timeframe ... the collection of data and information for the review had to be conducted within a limited " research window " (May 25 - June 20) in order for the review to be completed before the end of the current school year.

- Timeframe ... due to the limited research window for the analysis of all data and information derived from the school visits, the various meetings and interviews and the school survey ,there was not time for some further explorations related to possible data connections (for example trying to match FTE LA Teacher Ratio information to reported Caseload information by size of school, size of district and by region or to type of program and students served).

- Timeframe ... the review was conducted at a point in the school year when LA teachers are extremely busy with year-end functions including " transition work ", follow-up assessments , program documentation and report preparation and this may have affected the responses to the school survey questions. In addition, the timing of the review may have affected the level of participation in the field - work meetings.

- Communications ... although the review information, including rationale, meeting schedules and the actual surveys were distributed to districts by the Special Programs Branch in mid-May, there were some reported cases where participants indicated they had received notices just a few days before scheduled meetings and some cases where surveys were received by LA teachers without the accompanying rationale / purpose.

- Size of Meeting Samples ... Some caution must be exercised due to the size of the representative samples resulting from the meetings involving teachers (138) and parents (146) within the field-work component of the review. In addition, it was not possible to conduct consensus-taking activities or to engage in detailed response tabulations during the meetings. Instead common themes were identified and repeated responses were captured and summarized.

- School Survey Responses ... As with most surveys of this nature care must be exercised due to the variation in the number of respondents answering each question ... some do not answer all questions or some only answer one part of the question ... therefore results can vary between questions and sometimes within questions making it very difficult to analyze data connections or to cross reference some information items.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The data/information derived from the survey and the information derived from the school visits and structured interviews and meetings (the field-work component) were analyzed according to the following analytical framework :

A. Data / Information

- the key research questions
- statistical trends
- emerging patterns
- service delivery similarities or variations
    - related to policy-procedure frameworks
    - related to service delivery model
    - related to district characteristics (size; type)
    - related to school characteristics (size; type)
- human resource demands
    - related to nature of program/services/students
    - related to caseload/service demand
    - related to administrative requirements
- service delivery/identified "best practices" and suggested improvements
- service delivery / challenges identified
- program / service efficacy considerations

B. Implications of the data / information

- related to trends / patterns
- related to provincial, school district and school levels.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Analysis of Findings

GENERAL FRAMEWORK - LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

KEY QUESTIONS

- How is program direction for Learning Assistance determined and set out in school districts ?
- Are Learning Assistance Services differentiated from other school-based services . . . those provided to 'designated' special education students . . . or are special education services "seamless" at the school level ?
- Are management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services generally made 'centrally' by the Board, or are management decisions decentralized, at the school level ?

Program Direction and Purpose :

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer To Table 1).**

- From the sample it is clear that the most common response on the part of respondents (21.7 %) was that program purpose and direction are set out both specifically and generally at both the district and school levels.
- Equal numbers of respondents indicated that purpose and direction are set out specifically at the district and school levels (14 . 8 %) and set out generally at the district and school levels (14 . 8 %).

  * Results would appear to indicate that there is a wide variation in how the purpose/direction and description of Learning Assistance Services are set out within the sampled school districts.

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interviews / Summary of Responses) (16 Participants).**

- Responses during the interviews (10) with school district level administrators show a similar pattern of wide variation in approaches to setting out purpose and direction for Learning Assistance Services.
- Approximately one-third (1/3) indicated there is no specific policy set out for Learning Assistance. Six (6) out of ten (10) indicated that program guidelines were in place and were contained in Special Programs Manuals or Handbooks.
- Two (2) districts mentioned policies that were put in place several years earlier (one as early as 1973) and which were contained in Board Policy Manuals. Seven (7) districts were unaware of any formal district policies governing Learning Assistance.
- In addition to manuals and handbooks, the interview participants mentioned other activities to establish direction :

- Meeting with Learning Assistance Teachers to go over Ministry Guidelines and also district program guidelines.
- Regular updates provided to school administrators regarding policy and guidelines for special education.
- Ensuring direct and frequent contact with schools regarding special programs.
- Providing release time for Learning Assistance Teachers to develop new/revised program guide-lines for the district.
- Relying on the local L.A. Teachers' Association to provide guidelines, continuity, etc.

❑ **TEACHER MEETINGS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - Teacher Meetings / Summary of Responses) (138 Participants).**

- Responses during the meetings with teachers also show the pattern of wide variation in approach to setting out purpose and direction for Learning Assistance.

- Some participants indicated that direction is largely set out by L.A. Teachers themselves and not by the district . . . that as the role continues to expand L.A. Teachers are developing "best practice' statements for the district.

- Teachers mentioned receiving direction from the Ministry Manual -Guidelines; School District Special Programs Manuals/Handbooks; Learning Assistance Program Binders developed by teachers and district staff; District Meetings for L.A. Teachers; L.A. Teacher Position Descriptions; District Inservice Meetings; Meetings of the Learning Assistance Teachers' Association; School-Based Team Meetings.

- Some indicated that district guidelines or handbooks were out-of-date and thus do not reflect the significant changes that have taken place regarding the provision of L.A. Services.

- Others mentioned there was very little direction provided by the school district, especially in written form.

- Some (at the secondary school level) indicated that at times it appears that the program direction is dictated by the school timetable and administration decisions.

- With very few exceptions the participants indicated that program direction is largely determined at the individual school accordingly :

    - based on student and school needs.
    - determined by the school administration at the secondary level.
    - determined collaboratively at the elementary level between staff and administration.
    - determined by the School-Based-Team.
    - determined through school staff direction.
    - defined parameters set out by the school.
    - determined by the L. A. Teacher(s) - professional autonomy.
    - determined by considering regular teachers' teaching style, the age of students and their needs, the space available, the numbers of students requiring service.

- determined according to the school's "needs list".
- determined by the ' staff committee/staff council '.

Table 1

How The Purpose And Description Of LA Sevices Are Set Out

Number Of Schools Responding : 115

No. Of Responses	*%*	*Sub Category*
10	8.7	**Specifically at district level**
13	11.3	Specifically at school level
11	9.6	Generally at district level
08	6.9	Generally at school level
17	14.8	Specific district / specific school
17	14.8	General district / general school
07	6.1	Specific district / general school
07	6.1	Specific school / general district
25	21.7	All choices selected

Service Differentiation

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Figure 1) (Also refer to Report Supplement 2 - Survey Comments Summary).**

- Ninety-five (95) of the one hundred and fifteen (115) schools in the sample responded to the question on service differentiation and eighty percent (80 %) of these indicated that Learning Assistance Services are differentiated from other school-based services provided to 'designated' special education students.

- The survey question (2) also elicited comments about the nature of the service and here there would appear to be some discrepancy. Approximately **one-half (1/2) of the 81** comments describe non-differentiated programs/services.

- Approximately 12 of the 81 respondents indicated that while there is distinct criteria for Learning Assistance and the program is differentiated, the actual delivery of service becomes integrated with the delivery of other special education services, especially when the L.A. Teacher has a combined special education assignment (L.A. plus Special Needs) or where the L.A. Teacher is the only special programs teacher in the school.

- Approximately 5 of the 81 respondents also indicated that while the L.A. Program has been differentiated in the past, their schools are moving to a "seamless" model - resource model- with one of the major factors being the reduction of resources/staff time.

❑ **SCHOOL VISITS / MEETINGS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - School Visits / Summary of Responses) (78 Participants).**

- Responses during the School Visits (30 schools - 78 participants) also indicate that there is a higher level of non-differentiation of Learning Assistance Services than indicated in the response to the Survey Question 2.

- Of the 30 schools visited, 23 indicate they are delivering Learning Assistance Services within a "seamless" or "resource model" (77%).

Figure 1

LA Service Differentiation
Number of Schools Responding : 95

Differentiated	76	%	80
Not Differentiated	19	%	20

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interviews / Summary of Responses) (16 Participants).**

- During the interviews with district administrators it was pointed out that the nature of the service largely depends on individual school decisions . . . . that the schools decide how they will use their resources to meet the needs of all students with special needs in the school.

- Here again the pattern would seem to indicate a high level of non-differentiation in the delivery of Learning Assistance Services. In addition, all but one of those districts indicating they differentiate the service also indicate they are moving to the "seamless" or "resource" model in the near future.

❑ **TEACHER MEETINGS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - Teacher Meetings / Summary of Responses).**

- Responses during the Teacher Meetings (138 participants) indicate significant variation from school to school and especially from elementary to secondary schools.

- Several themes emerged :

    - There is often a difference in approach between elementary schools and secondary schools/school organization.
    - Individual school philosophy and approach to inclusion varies.
    - Many L. A. teachers have "combination assignments" covering a variety of special needs.
    - There is a move to more collaborative models.
    - Service delivery is organized so that classroom teachers have only one support person to interact with.
    - School size and district size often influence how service is to be delivered.
    - Many schools have just the L.A. teacher to provide all special services.
    - Teacher skill and preference influence the model utilized.

- Seventy-one percent (71 %) of those responding indicated that Learning

Assistance Services are in reality non-differentiated in terms of actual service delivery and are part of a "seamless" model.

Management - Decision - Making

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Figure 2) (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interview / Summary of Responses).**

- From the sample, just over sixty-six percent (66.1 %) of respondents indicate that management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services are generally made both centrally and at the school level.
- In addition, just over thirty percent (30.4 %) indicate these decisions are made at the school level.
- This would seem to be consistent with the earlier responses indicating that program direction is largely determined at the individual school level.

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interviews / Summary of Responses) (16 Participants).**

- Responses during the interviews with district administrators confirm that decision-making regarding Learning Assistance Services is generally carried out at the individual school level.
- Responses indicate some central decision-making in relation to :
    - initial budget allocation to schools
    - staffing allocation (some aspects)
    - overall process and structure
    - ensuring Ministry requirements are met
- Almost all participants indicated that schools make decisions within very "loose" district parameters, including staffing, organization and program structure - service delivery.
- In terms of decision-making accountability, participants indicate that where schools are responsible for decisions concerning Learning Assistance Services the following examples of accountability provisions are sometimes employed :
    - internal audit process
    - review during the school accreditation process
    - monitoring by the School - Based Team
    - informal monitoring through school visits and meetings
    - holding regular meetings of L.A. Teachers and an annual retreat
    - comprehensive review of special education services every three years
    - L.A. staff are evaluated by District personnel rather than the Principal
    - program financial accounting occurs through the school district central office

Figure 2

How Management Decisions Are Made Regarding LA Services
Number Of Schools Responding : 115

No. Of Responses	%	Sub Category
4	3 . 5	**Centrally by Board / District Staff**
35	30 . 4	At School Level
76	66 . 1	Both Centrally and At School Level

Review of Learning Assistance Services
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Analysis of Findings

THE LEARNING ASSISTANCE RESOURCE

KEY QUESTIONS

- How are resources for Learning Assistance Services allocated to schools ?
- How is the 'caseload' for Learning Assistance Teachers established ?
- What is the average total caseload of Learning Assistance Teachers in the schools sampled ?
- What is the ratio of Learning Assistance FTE's to student population in the schools sampled ?
- What are the time factors related to the key functions/activities of Learning Assistance Teachers ?

Resource Allocation

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 2).**

- From the sample it is clear that there is a wide variation in how resources are allocated to schools for Learning Assistance Services.

- The most common method is through a general school budget allocation (25 . 2 %), followed by a separate Learning Assistance Staff allocation formula (16 . 8 %) and a separate budget and separate staff allocation formula (15 . 0 %).

- However, responses also indicate that the resources allocated for Learning Assistance Services tend to be largely targeted :

separate budget allocation	14 . 0 %
separate L A staff allocation	16 . 8 %
separate budget and separate staff allocation	15 . 0 %
general budget but separate staff allocation	5 . 6 %
separate budget with general staff allocation	2 . 8 %
	54 . 2 %

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Refer to Report Supplement 1 District Interviews / Summary of Responses).**

- Responses during the interviews with district administrators indicate that almost all of the districts interviewed tend to use special formulas for allocating resources to schools. Examples provided include :

  a. 410 FTE grades 1 7 = 1. 0 FTE LA Teacher

     550 FTE grades 8 -10 = 1. 0 FTE LA Teacher

     1000 FTE grades 11-12 = 1. 0 FTE LA Teacher

b. K 4 = 0. 30 LA FTE time per 100 students

512 = 0. 45 LA FTE time per 100 students

c. Minimum = . 5 FTE LA Teacher for all schools

Maximum = 2. 0 FTE LA Teacher for all schools

- From the discussions it became apparent that in larger secondary schools the resources allocated for Learning Assistance Services tend to be significantly less per student than those generated for elementary schools. (This pattern also emerges when examining LA Teacher Ratio information found in Charts 3 + 4 ... following).

Table 2

How Resources Are Allocated To Schools For LA Services
Number Of Schools Responding : 107

No. Of Responses	%	*Sub Category*
27	25. 2	Part of General Budget Allocation
15	14. 0	Separate Budget Allocation LA
12	11. 2	General School Staff Formula
18	16. 8	Separate LA Staff Allocation Formula
10	9. 3	General Budget / General Staff Formula
16	15. 0	Separate Budget /Separate Staff Formula
06	5. 6	General Budget/Separate Staff Formula
03	2. 8	Separate Budget/ General Staff Formula

Learning Assistance Teacher Caseload

ESTABLISHING CASELOAD (Refer to Table 3).

- Sample schools were asked to indicate how the caseload for L.A. teachers is established :
  - "classroom teacher referrals" received the highest rate of response (95. 6 %)
  - "school-based-team recommendations and decisions" received the second highest rate of response (94. 8 %)
  - "screening and assessment processes" received the third highest rate of response (84. 3 %) The level of response to "school administration decisions" largely

- influencing caseload determination was (58.3 %). Some participants offered comments indicating that this level of involvement was due to a strong collaborative working relationship between L.A. staff and the school administration; A few others indicated that such involvement in the establishment of caseloads was due to administrative expediency in placing 'problem students' in the L.A. program.

- A very strong 'driver' behind the establishment of caseloads is "level of teacher time available" (76. 5 %). This would appear to reflect the comments of many participants throughout the review to the effect that L.A. time is often at a premium given the number of students who require service and at times, given the reduction of L.A. time that some schools are experiencing.

CASELOAD RANGE (Refer to Table 4).

- Sample schools were asked to provide information about the average total caseload of L.A. teachers, both current and year-to-date :

  ** The information provided must be viewed in the context that those responding were L.A. teachers working in elementary schools as well as secondary schools and L.A. teachers who have had varying FTE assignments and program responsibilities (eg. L.A. as well as 'designated students').

  - what can be seen from the results is that in terms of current caseload, over 25 % (29 respondents) report average caseloads of between 51 to 100 plus students.
  - further, in terms of year-to-date caseload, almost 68 % (78 respondents) report average caseloads of between 41 to 100 plus students.
  - 16. 5 % (19 respondents) report average YTD case-loads of between 81 to 100 plus students.

Table 3

Establishing LA Teacher Caseload

Number Of Schools Responding : 115

No. Of Responses	*%*	*Sub Category*
97	84. 3	Screening / Assessment Process
110	95. 6	Class Teacher referrals
84	73. 0	Parent Referrals
50	43. 5	Student-Initiated Referrals
52	45. 2	Counsellor Referrals
109	94. 8	SB Team Recommend/Decisions
67	58. 3	Sch Admin Decisions
94	81. 7	Set By LA Teacher Priorities
74	64. 3	Nature of The Service
88	76. 5	Level of Teacher Time Available
14	12. 2	Other

Other Factors

- Elementary school referrals/Support Team referrals
- Related to budget cuts / staffing cuts
- School administration collaboration and support
- Number of peer tutors available
- Collective Agreement / Seats available
- Sp/Lang Path and Psychoeducational Assessments
- " At Risk Student List "
- " Language Support Team " / Planning

Table 4

Average Total Caseload Of LA Teachers

(Caseload Range)

Number Of Schools Responding : 115

Current / Active Caseload		*Year To Date Caseload*	
Caseload	Responses	Caseload	Responses
1 5	01	1 5	-
6 10	03	6 10	01
11 15	09	11 15	05
16 20	10	16 20	06
21 25	12	21 25	05
26 30	16	26 30	05
31 35	11	31 35	06
36 40	13	36 40	09
41 45	04	41 45	06
46 50	07	46 50	17
51 55	08	51 55	07
56 60	09	56 60	07
61 65	-	61 65	07
66 70	04	66 70	03
71 75	03	71 75	04
76 80	-	76 80	05
81 85	-	81 85	03
86 90	03	86 90	04
91 95	-	91 95	01
96 100	+ 02	96 100	+ 14

CASELOADS Percentage of School Population and District Size (Refer to

Chart 1).

- From the sample some patterns become evident :
    - average current caseload as a percentage of school population is higher in elementary schools than in secondary schools in small, mid-size and larger school districts.
    - average year-to-date caseload as a percentage of school population is higher in elementary schools than in secondary schools in small, mid-size and larger school districts.
    - average current caseload as a percentage of school population is higher in small school districts than in mid-size and larger school districts.
    - average year-to-date caseload as a percentage of school population is higher in small school districts than in mid-size school districts, but is lower in small school districts than in larger school districts.

CASELOADS Percentage of School Population and School Size (Refer to Chart 1).

- From the sample, small elementary schools tend to have higher average current caseloads as a percentage of school population than mid-size and larger elementary schools.
- Small secondary schools in small school districts tend to have significantly higher average current caseloads as a percentage of school population than mid-size and larger secondary schools.
- Mid-size elementary schools tend to have higher average current caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger elementary schools.
- Mid-size secondary schools tend to have higher average current caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger secondary schools. There is likely a linkage to the allocation of FTE LA teacher time ... ratios are higher in large secondary schools.
- Small elementary schools tend to have higher average year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population than mid-size and larger elementary schools.
- Small secondary schools in small school districts tend to have significantly higher average year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population than mid-size and larger secondary schools.
- Mid-size elementary schools tend to have higher average year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger elementary schools.
- Mid-size secondary schools tend to have higher average year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger secondary schools. Again there is a likely linkage to the FTE LA teacher allocation ... ratios are higher in large secondary schools.

(Also Refer to Figure 2 A Following)

FIGURE 2 A
Caseload District Size Totals (112 Schools)

	Enrol	Current Caseload	% Pop.	YTD	% Pop.
Small School Districts	4407	409	9.3	573	13.0
Mid-Size School Districts	12,827	1056	8.2	1650	12.9
Larger School Districts	32,207	2754	8.6	4396	13.6
All Districts (Sample)	49,441	4219	8.5	6619	13.4

CASELOADS Percentage of School Population Regional (Refer to Chart 2).

Note : Some caution should be exercised in data interpretation given the rate of return by region (varying number of schools).

- Average current caseload at the elementary level as a percentage of school population is highest in the Kootenay Region and is the lowest in the Lower Mainland/Coast Region.
- The same pattern emerges in relation to average year-to-date caseload at the elementary level as a percentage of school population.
- Average current caseload at the secondary level as a percentage of school population is highest in the Kootenay Region and is the lowest in the Lower Mainland/Coast Region.
- The same pattern emerges in relation to average year-to-date caseload at the secondary level as a percentage of school population.
- At the elementary level, small schools in all regions except the Vancouver Island Region, tend to have a higher average current caseload as a percentage of school population than mid-size schools.
- At the secondary level, mid-size schools in all Regions except the Vancouver Island Region, tend to have higher average current caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger schools.
- At the elementary level, the Okanagan-Cariboo Region is alone in having a higher average current caseload as a percentage of chool population in larger schools than in mid-size schools.
- At the secondary level, the Vancouver Island Region is alone in having a higher average current caseload as a percentage of school population in larger schools than in mid-size schools.
- At the elementary level, small schools in all regions except the Kootenay Region (no response) and Okanagan-Cariboo Region, tend to have a higher year-to-date caseload as a percentage of school population than mid-size schools and larger schools . . . ad mid-size schools have a higher percentage than larger schools in all districts reporting.
- At the secondary level, mid-size schools in all regions tend to have higher average year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population than larger schools.

FIGURE 2 B

Caseload Regional Totals (112 Schools)

	Enrol	Current Caseload	% pop.	YTD Case.	% Pop.
Kootenay Region	2101	241	11.5	361	17.2
Okanagan-Cariboo Region	6308	660	10.5	1019	16.1
Lower Mainland/Coast Reg.	21,119	1599	7.6	2473	11.7
Vancouver Island Region	13,394	1122	8.4	1755	14.2
North Region	6519	597	9.1	1011	15.5
All Regions	49,441	4219	8.5	6619	13.4

Learning Assistance Teacher Ratios

DISTRICT SIZE AND L.A. TEACHER RATIO (Refer to Chart 3).

From the sample, it is clear that as district size increases so does the Learning Assistance Teacher Ratio. Overall the pattern is :

	Enrol.	FTE/LA	Ratio
Small School Districts	4,407	14. 65	1/301
Mid-Size School Districts	12, 827	39.5 0	1/325
Larger School Districts	34,261	81. 64	1/420
All School Districts (Sample) (114 Schools)	51,495	135. 8	1/379

- At the elementary level, the ratio increases as the size of the school increases in both small and larger school districts, but it decreases as the size of school increases in mid-size school districts.
- At the secondary level, the ratio increases as the size of school increases in both small and larger school districts but it decreases between mid-size and larger schools in mid-size school districts.
- At the elementary level, there is little difference between the ratios from mid-size schools to larger schools.
- At the secondary level, there is a significant increase in the ratio from mid-size to larger schools in small and larger school districts and a decrease in the ratio from mid-size to larger schools in midsize school districts.
- Larger schools, especially at the secondary level, tend to have significantly higher L.A. Teacher ratios.

L.A. TEACHER RATIO REGIONAL (Refer to Chart 4).

- From the sample, the overall pattern that emerges is :

	Enrol.	FTE/LA	Ratio	Rank
Kootenay Region	2,101	5.98	1/351	4
Okanagan -Cariboo Region	6,562	20.85	1/315	1
Lower Mainland/Coast Region	22,919	51.61	1/444	5
Vancouver Island Region	13,394	38.69	1/346	3
North Region	6,519	19.22	1/339	2
All Regions (Sample)	51,495	136.35	1/378	

*** Note : Totals for FTE will not be exact in relation to Chart 3 due to rounding of numbers.**

Learning Assistance Teachers Key Functions

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Tables 5A to 5D).**

- Sampled schools were asked to provide the percentage of time and the average hours per week spent by L.A. Teachers in key functions. Not all schools responded to all of the functions listed in the survey nor did all school complete each part of the question (% and hrs./ week). Some respondents indicated that it was extremely difficult to accurately or precisely answer the survey question and therefore responses were "best estimates". Others indicated difficulty due to the nature of the LA Teachers' assignments (combined assignments; part-time assignments). However, the responses provided do reveal some interesting patterns.

TABLE 5 / A Consultation With Other Teachers (102/109 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 45. 1 % of those responding indicated they spend from 0 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 35. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 6 10 % of their time on this activity.
- **94. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 15 % of their time on this activity.**
- less than 1 % of those responding indicated they spent from 16 25 % of their time on this activity

Hours Per Week

- 85. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 5 hours per week on this function.
- **98. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 hours per week on this function.**
- 12. 8 % of those responding indicated they spent 6 10 hours per week on this function.

TABLE 5 / A Planning Instructional Activities To Be Delivered By Other Teachers or Teaching Assistants.
(101/107 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 74. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 12. 9 % of those responding indicated they spent from 6 10 % of their time on this activity.
- 87. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity.
- **94. 0 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 15 % of their time on this activity.**
- 4. 9 % of those responding indicated they spent from 16 25 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 95. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 5 hours per week on

this function.

- **98. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 hours per week on this function.**
- 2. 8 % of those responding indicated they spent 6 10 hours per week on this function.

TABLE 5 / B IEP Development and Management (99/106 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 66. 7 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 25. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent from 6 10 % of of their time on this activity.
- 91. 9 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity.
- **95. 9 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 15 % of their time on this activity.**

Hours Per Week

- 95. 3 of those responding indicated they spent from 0 5 hours per week on this function.
- **99. 0 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 hours per week on this function.**
- 3. 8 % of those responding indicated they spent 6 10 hours per week on this function.

Table 5 A

LA Teachers Percent (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)

ACTIVITY : CONSULTATION WITH OTHER TEACHERS

Number Of Schools Responding : 102 / 109

Responses	% Time	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
4	0 - 5	93	0 - 5
36	6 - 10	14	6 - 10
14	11 - 15	02	11 - 15
03	16 - 20	00	16 - 20
03	21 - 25	00	21 - 25

ACTIVITY : PLANNING INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Number Of Schools Responding : 102 / 107

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
7	**0 - 5**	102	0 - 5
13	**6 - 10**	03	6 - 10
07	**11 - 15**	01	11 - 15
04	**16 - 20**	01	16 - 20
01	**21 - 25**	00	21 - 25

TABLE 5 / B School-Based Team Meetings (102/108 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 77. 4 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 19. 6 % of those responding indicated they spent from 6 10 % of their time on this activity.
- 97. 0 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity.
- **100 % indicated they spent from 0 15 % of their time on this activity.**
- 2. 9 % indicated they spent from 11 15 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 99. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 5 hours per week on this function.
- .9 % indicated they spent from 6 10 hours per week on this function.
- **100 % indicated they spent from 6 10 hours per week on this function.**

Table 5 B

LA Teachers Percent (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)

ACTIVITY : IEP DEVELOPMENT / MANAGEMENT

Number Of Schools Responding : 99 / 106

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
6	0 - 5	101	0 - 5
25	6 - 10	04	6 - 10
04	11 - 15	01	11 - 15
02	16 - 20	00	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	00	21 - 25
01	26 - 30	00	26 - 30
00	31 - 35	00	31 - 35
01	36 - 40	00	36 - 40
00	41 - 45	00	41 - 45
00	46 - 50	00	46 - 50

ACTIVITY : SCHOOL BASED TEAM MEETINGS

Number Of Schools Responding : 102 / 108

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
7	0 - 5	107	0 - 5
20	6 - 10	01	6 - 10
03	11 - 15	00	11 - 15
00	16 - 20	00	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	00	21 - 25

TABLE 5 / C Assessment of Students (104/109 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 50. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 34. 6 % of those responding indicated they spent from 6 10 % of their time on this activity.
- 85. 6 % indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity.
- 10. 6 % indicated they spent from 11-15 % of their time on this activity.
- **96. 1 % indicated they spent from 0 15 % of their time on this activity.**
- 1. 9 % indicated they spent from 16 25 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 91. 7 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 hours per week on this function.
- 5. 5 % indicated they spent from 6 10 hours per week on this function.
- 2. 7 % indicated they spent from 11-15 hours per week on this function.
- **100 % indicated they spent from 0-15 hours per week on this function.**

TABLE 5 / C Working With Parents (101/107 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 84. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity.
- 11. 9 % indicated they spent from 6-10 % of their time on this activity.
- **96 % indicated they spent from 0-10 % of their time on this activity.**
- 4 % indicated they spent from 11-20 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 99. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 hours per week on this function.
- **100 % indicated they spent from 0 10 hours per week on this function (Most indicate from 1/2 hour to 1 hour per week).**

Table 5 C

LA Teachers Percent (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)

ACTIVITY : ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

Number Of Schools Responding : 104 / 109

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
53	**0 - 5**	100	0 - 5
36	**6 - 10**	06	6 - 10
11	**11 - 15**	03	11 - 15
01	**16 - 20**	00	16 - 20
01	**21 - 25**	00	21 - 25
01	**26 - 30**	00	26 - 30
00	**31 - 35**	00	31 - 35
01	**36 - 40**	00	36 - 40
00	**41 - 45**	00	41 - 45
00	**46 - 50**	00	46 - 50

ACTIVITY : WORKING WITH PARENTS

Number Of Schools Responding : 101 / 107

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
85	0 - 5	106	0 - 5
12	6 - 10	01	6 - 10
03	11 - 15	00	11 - 15
01	16 - 20	00	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	00	21 - 25
00	26 - 30	00	26 - 30
00	31 - 35	00	31 - 35
00	36 - 40	00	36 - 40
00	1 - 45	00	41 - 45
00	46 - 50	00	46 - 50

TABLE 5 / D Working With Other Agencies (102/108).

% Time Spent

- 91. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity (Most indicate the lower end . . . up to 2 %).
- 8. 8 % indicated they spent from 6-10 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- **99. 1 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 5 hours per week on this function (Most indicate very minimal time spent . . . 0 to 20 minutes per week).**

TABLE 5 / D Direct Instruction To Students (100/107 Responses).

% Time Spent

- 24 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 50 % of their time on this activity.
- Of these, 6 % indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity and 15 % indicated they spent from 36 50 % of their time on this activity.
- **76 % of those responding indicated they spent from 51 100 % of their time on this activity.**
- Of these, 36 % indicated they spent from 51 70 % of their time on this activity and;
- 29 % indicated they spent from 71 85 % of their time on this activity and;
- 11 % indicated they spent from 86 100 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 38. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 15 hours per week on this function.
- **61. 7 % indicated they spent from 16 50 hours per week on this function.**
- Of these, 46. 8 % indicated they spent from 16 30 hours per week on this function and;
- 14. 9 % indicated they spent from 31 50 hours per week on this function.

Table 5 D

LA Teachers Percent (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)

ACTIVITY : WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES Number Of Schools Responding : 102 / 108

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
93	0 - 5	107	0 - 5
09	6 - 10	01	6 - 10
00	11 - 15	00	11 - 15
00	16 - 20	00	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	00	21 - 25
00	26 - 30	00	26 - 30

ACTIVITY : DIRECT INSTRUCTION TO STUDENTS Number Of Schools Responding : 100 / 107

Responses	*% Time*	*Responses*	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
0	0 - 5	09	0 - 5
02	6 - 10	13	6 - 10
00	11 - 15	19	11 - 15
02	16 - 20	19	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	25	21 - 25
00	26 - 30	06	26 - 30
01	31 - 3	07	31 - 35
04	36 - 40	01	36 - 40
00	41 - 45	03	41 - 45
11	46 - 50	05	46 - 50
36	51 - 70	00	51 - 70
29	71 - 85	00	71 - 85
0	86 - 90	00	86 - 90
07	91 - 100	00	91 - 100

Learning Assistance Teachers DIRECT INSTRUCTION

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 6; Table 7; Table 8).**

Sampled schools were asked to provide the percentage of time and the average hours per week spent by L.A. Teachers on Direct Instruction to Students. Not all

schools responded, nor did some of those responding complete each part of the question (% and hrs/ week). Again, some respondents indicated difficulty in providing accurate/precise information.

TABLE 6 Direct Instruction / In-Class Students (98/102).

% Time Spent

- **62. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 15 % of their time on this activity.**
- Of these, 47. 9 % indicated they spent up to 5 % of their time on this activity and 14. 3 % indicated they spent from 6 15 % of their time on this activity.
- 15. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 16 35 % of their time on this activity.
- 16. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 36 75 % of their time on this activity.
- 6. 1 % of those responding indicted they spent from 91 100 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- **90. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 15 hours per week on this function.**
- Of these, 68. 6 % indicated they spent up to 5 hours per week on this function and; 14.7 % indicated they spent from 6 10 hours per week on this function and; 6.9 % indicated they spent from 11 15 hours per week on this function.
- 8. 8 % of those responding indicated they spent from 16 35 hours per week on this function.

Table 6

DIRECT INSTRUCTION - IN CLASS STUDENTS Percentage (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)
Number Of Schools Responding : 98 / 102

No. Resp.	% Time	No. Resp.	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
47	0 - 5	70	0 - 5
09	6 - 10	15	6 - 10
05	11 - 15	07	11 - 15
05	16 - 20	02	16 - 20
06	21 - 25	06	21 - 25
01	26 - 30	00	26 - 30
0	31 - 35	01	31 - 35
02	36 - 40	00	36 - 40
01	41 - 45	00	41 - 45
07	46 - 50	01	46 - 50
01	51 - 55	00	51 - 55
03	56 - 60	00	56 - 60
00	61 - 65	00	61 - 65
01	66 - 70	00	66 - 70
01	71 - 75	00	71 - 75
00	76 - 80	00	76 - 80
00	81 - 85	00	81 - 85
00	86 - 90	00	86 - 90
01	91 - 95	00	91 - 95
05	96 - 100	00	96 - 100

TABLE 7 Direct Instruction / Pull-Out Students (107/108).

% Time Spent

- **63. 0 % of those responding indicated they spent from 66 100 % of their time on this activity.**
- Of these, 24. 3 % indicated they spent from 66 80 % of their time on this activity and; 34. 6 % indicated they spent from 81 100 % of their time on this activity.
- 23. 4 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 40 % of their time on this activity.
- 17. 7 % of those responding indicated they spent from 41 65 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- 65. 7 % of those responding indicated they spent up to 15 hours per week on this function.
- 30. 6 % of those responding indicated they spent from 16 35 hours per week on this function.
- 58. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 11 40 hours per week

on this function.

- 3. 7 % of those responding indicated they spent from 36 55 hours per week on this function.
- **96. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 35 hours per week on this function.**

Table 7

DIRECT INSTRUCTION - PULL - OUT STUDENTS

Percentage (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)
Number Of Schools Responding : 107 / 108

No. Resp.	% Time	No. Resp.	*Aver Hrs/Wk*
0	**0 - 5**	23	0 - 5
05	6 - 10	19	6 - 10
02	11 - 15	29	11 - 15
02	16 - 20	09	16 - 20
02	21 - 25	18	21 - 25
03	26 - 30	04	26 - 30
01	31 - 35	02	31 - 35
01	36 - 40	01	36 - 40
02	41 - 45	01	41 - 45
07	46 - 50	01	46 - 50
01	51 - 55	01	51 - 55
08	56 - 60	00	56 - 60
01	61 - 65	00	61 - 65
08	66 - 70	00	66 - 70
10	71 - 75	00	71 - 75
08	76 - 80	00	76 - 80
02	81 - 85	00	81 - 85
02	86 - 90	00	86 - 90
06	91 - 95	00	91 - 95
27	96 - 100	00	96 - 100

TABLE 8 Direct Instruction / Support Blocks (98/96).

% Time Spent

- 65. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 10 % of their time on this activity.
- **74. 5 % of those responding indicated they spent from 0 20 % of their**

time on this activity.

- 13. 3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 26 65 % of their time on this activity.
- 12. 2 % of those responding indicated they spent from 71 100 % of their time on this activity.

Hours Per Week

- **92. 7 % of those responding indicted they spent from 0 20 hours per week on this function.**
- Of these, 86. 4 % indicated they spent 0 10 hours per week on this function.

- 7.3 % of those responding indicated they spent from 21 45 hours per week on this function.
- Of these, 5. 2 % indicated they spent from 21 - 30 hours per week on this function.

Table 8

DIRECT INSTRUCTION - SUPPORT BLOCKS

Percentage (%) Of Time (Range)
Average Hours Per Week (Range)
Number Of Schools Responding : 98 / 96

No. Resp.	**% Time**	**No. Resp.**	***Aver Hrs/Wk***
52	**0 - 5**	76	0 - 5
12	6 - 10	07	6 - 10
06	11 - 15	04	11 - 15
03	16 - 20	02	16 - 20
00	21 - 25	03	21 - 25
03	26 - 30	02	26 - 30
02	31 - 35	01	31 - 35
03	36 - 40	00	36 - 40
00	41 - 45	01	41 - 45
03	46 - 50	00	46 - 50
00	51 - 55	00	51 - 55
01	56 - 60	00	56 - 60
01	61 - 65	00	61 - 65
00	66 - 70	00	66 - 70
01	71 - 75	00	71 - 75
02	76 - 80	00	76 - 80
00	81 - 85	00	81 - 85
04	86 - 90	00	86 - 90
00	91 - 95	00	91 - 95

00	91 - 95	00	91 - 95
05	96 - 100	00	96 - 100

Year - To - Date Caseload - Student Services

*** Some respondents did not provide information in some categories.**

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 9).**

Assessment and Consultation :

- 84 % of those responding indicated that up to 20 % of the student caseload were seen primarily for assessment and consultation.
- Of these, 65. 9 % indicated that up to 10 % of the students were seen primarily for this purpose and; 18.1 % of respondents indicated that from 11 - 20 % of the students were seen primarily for assessment and consultation purposes.

Collaborative Planning :

- 75. 2 % of those responding indicated that up to 20 % of the student caseload were provided services that primarily involved collaborative planning.
- Of these, 55. 4 % indicated that up to 10 % of the student caseload were provided services that primarily involved collaborative planning and; 19. 8 % of respondents indicated that from 11 - 20 % of the students were provided services that primarily involved collaborative planning.
- 9. 9 % of respondents indicated that from 91 - 100 % of the students were provided services that primarily involved collaborative planning.

Ongoing Instruction :

- 70. 4 % of those responding indicated that from 61 - 100 % of the student caseload were provided ongoing instruction by the L.A. Teacher.
- Of these, 23. 1 % indicated that from 91 - 100 % of the student caseload were provided ongoing instruction and; 36. 1 % indicated that from 61 - 80 % of the student caseload were provided ongoing instruction.
- 19. 4 % of those responding indicated that from 21 - 60 % of the student caseload were provided ongoing instruction.
- 10. 2 % of those responding indicated that from 0 - 20 % of the student caseload were provided ongoing instruction.

Full Range Services (Assessment; Planning; Instruction) :

- 47. 2 % of those responding indicated that from 71 - 100 % of the student caseload were accessing all services provided by the L.A. Teacher.
- Of these, 18. 7 % indicated that from 91 - 100 % of the student caseload were accessing all services and; 15. 4 % indicated that from 81 - 90 % of the student caseload were accessing all services.
- 39. 6 % of those responding indicated that from 0 - 30 % of the student caseload were accessing all services.
- Of these, 30. 8 % indicated that from 0 - 10 % of the student caseload were accessing all services.

Table 9 STUDENT SERVICES

Proportion Of Caseload (Year To Date)

Number Of Schools Responding : 112

PERCENT											
RESP.	ACTIVITY	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
94	Asses/C.	62	17	3	6	1	2	1			2
101	Col.Plan.	56	20	7	3		1	3	1		10
108	Instruct.	8	3	1	5	7	8	12	15	24	25
91	All Serv.	28	4	4	2	2	4	4	12	14	17

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Analysis of Findings

LEARNING ASSISTANCE - SERVICES TO STUDENTS.

KEY QUESTIONS

- Who are the students receiving Learning Assistance Support ?
- What proportion of these students are best described as having "mild to moderate learning difficulties" ?
- What proportion are identified as students in 'high incidence' funding categories ?
- What proportion are identified as students in 'low incidence' funding categories ?
- What proportion of 'other' students are being served within Learning Assistance ?
- What is the grade distribution of students receiving L.A. support ?
- What other support services are in place for those 'designated funding category students' who are receiving L.A. support ?
- What instructional support services are provided through the L.A. Program ?
- What assessment strategies are utilized ?

Students Receiving Learning Assistance Support

* **Note** : Not all respondents were able to provide student numbers. Respondents provided information specific to the listed categories and responses reflect varying numbers of schools operating/providing programs in each category.

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 10).**

- 74 % of the current caseload of students is comprised of students having mild to moderate learning difficulties, are slow learners or are of low average ability.
- **26 % of the current caseload of students is comprised of students from 'designated funding categories'.**
- Of these, 3 % are students with severe behaviour disorders and 3 % are students designated as 'low incidence' students and 20 % are students from the designated 'high incidence' categories.
- From the sample it seems clear that a significant number of students that are not students with mild to moderate learning difficulties, are receiving support through the Learning Assistance Program.
- This trend is consistent when looking at sample school responses related to both current and year-to-date caseloads.
- Respondents were also requested to provide information about typical program length (hrs/yr) for each of the program categories. The results were significantly varied and as many respondents pointed out the program length will vary according to such things as:

    - needs of the student
    - nature of the program
    - elementary - secondary differences
    - amount of L.A. time available

- Respondents were also requested to provide information as to whether or not the students being served in each program category had Individual Education Programs (IEP's). The results indicate that while a substantial amount of IEP work has obviously been accomplished there are some 'gaps':

Mild/Moderate	**82. 0 % Completion**
Slow Learner	**73. 6 % Completion**
Low Average	**69. 5 % Completion**
Severe Behaviour	**78. 9 % Completion**
Designated/Low	**88. 2 % Completion**
Designated/High	**82. 0 % Completion**

TABLE 10

Students Receiving Learning Assistance Support
Number Of Schools Responding : 112

CASELOAD

Reporting	Type	No. Students Current	% Total	No. Students YTD	% Total	Typ Prog Length HRS / YR	IEP
89	Mild/Mod	1404	29	1861	29	Varied	73Y/89
87	Slow Learn	965	20	1345	21	Varied	64Y/87
95	Low Aver	1222	25	1844	28	Varied	66Y/95
57	Sev Beh	129	3	153	2	Varied	45Y/57
51	Desig/Low	165	3	198	3	Varied	45Y/51
78	Desig/High	981	20	1106	17	Varied	64Y/78
	TOTAL	4866		6507			

Learning Assistance Students - Other Characteristics

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 11).**

- From the sample, 68 % of the sample schools report that of the students receiving L.A. support services 19. 83 % are students for whom English is an additional language.
- In addition, 62. 8 % of sample schools report that of the students receiving L.A. support services 12. 67 % are First Nations students.
- Together, these students comprise 32. 5 % of the total current caseload reported for the sample schools.

Learning Assistance - Sole Service To " Designated Funding Category Students ".

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Figure 3).**

- From the sample it is clear that a significant number of students who are described as 'designated funding category students' are receiving Learning Assistance as their sole supplemental service **(20 . 63 % of total current caseload)**.

Learning Assistance - Other Support Services To " Designated Funding Category Students ".. Who Are Also Receiving L.A. Support

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Report Supplement 2 - Survey Comments Summary)**

Sample schools were asked to provide information about support services in place in addition to L.A. Support Services for 'designated funding category' students. The following is a synopsis of the services mentioned :

- Teacher Assistants / Personal Attendants
- School Psychologists / Special Counsellors / Psychometrician
- Speech and Language Pathologist(s)
- English As An Additional Language Teacher(s)
- Child Care Workers / Family Support Workers
- Family Advancement Workers / Youth and Family Workers
- Occupational / Physiotherapy services
- Special Program Student Assistants / Peer Tutor
- Severe Learning Disabilities Teacher(s)
- Intensive Support Teacher(s) /Special Needs Resource Teacher(s)
- District Resource Teacher(s) / Itinerants
- Itinerant Teacher(s) - Hearing Impaired/Visually Impaired
- Parent Volunteer Helpers
- Severe Behaviour Teacher(s)
- Life Skills Instruction / Work Experience
- Behaviour Intervention Plans - Programs
- Rehabilitation Program/Services/Alternate Programs
- S.O.L.O. (computer assisted individual programs)
- Reading Support Blocks
- Transition Classes (secondary)
- Special Resource Teachers (designated)
- Student Integration Teacher/Integration Support Teacher
- Special Resource Room (school-based)
- First Nations Home-School Coordinator(s)
- Resources from S.E.T. B.C.
- District Consultant(s)/Severe Behaviour Consultant
- Teaching and Evaluation Centre - Consultation/Placement
- Counselling
- Learning Assistance Resource Teacher
- Minimum Essentials Teacher(s)
- Other Agencies (Health; Social Services).

Table 11 Learning Assistance Students - Other Characteristics

Number Of Schools Responding : 113

Schools Reporting		No. Students	% Total LA Caseload
77	Eng. / Add. Lang.	965	19 . 83 %
71	First Nations	617	12 . 67 %
	TOTAL	1582	

FIGURE 3
DESIGNATED FUNDING CATEGORY STUDENTS
RECEIVING LEARNING ASSISTANCE AS SOLE SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE
Number Of Schools Responding : 112

Number Of Students	*% Of Total / Current Caseload*
1004	**20 . 63 %**

Learning Assistance Students - Grade Level Distribution

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 12).**

- Sample schools were asked to provide information related to the grade level distribution of Learning Assistance students from their year-to-date caseloads.

  Note: Caseload total will vary from those reported earlier since not all sample schools responded to all questions or to components of some questions (eg. Information found in Table 4, Table 10, Table 12, Figure 2A and Figure 2B) .

- From the sample, the grades with the greatest coverage are :

  Grade 8 . . . . . 11. 8 %

  Grade 2 . . . . . 10. 0 %

  Grade 3 . . . . . 9. 0 %

- From the sample, the grades with the least coverage are :

  Kindergarten . . . . . 3. 1 %

  Grade 12 . . . . . 4. 1 %

TABLE 12
GRADE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION
LEARNING ASSISTANCE STUDENTS
(YEAR - TO - DATE CASELOAD)
Number Of Schools Responding : 113

GRADE	*NUMBER OF STUDENTS*	*% OF TOTAL LA*
K	**238**	3 . 1
1	669	8 . 8
2	745	10 . 0
3	679	9 . 0
4	608	8 . 0
5	627	8 . 3
6	557	7 . 4
7	509	6 . 7
8	893	11 . 8
9	643	8 . 5
10	554	7 . 3
11	526	7 . 0
12	313	4 . 1
TOTAL	**756**	**100 %**

Learning Assistance Program - Instructional Support Services

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 13).**

- Sample schools were asked to provide information about the nature of instructional support services provided through the L. A. program.
- From the sample, the activities **most frequently** mentioned were :

Consultation with other teachers	96. 3 %
Providing remedial instruction using adapted curriculum materials	95. 3 %
Assisting with assignments	94. 4 %
Providing remedial instruction using alternate materials	91. 6 %

- From the sample, the activities **least mentioned** were :

Pre-teaching concepts and/or vocabulary to be introduced in the classroom in future

Specific skills instruction for increased independence (keyboarding skills, using a tape recorder to take oral tests, etc.)

TABLE 13
A - INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES
Number Of Schools Responding : 107

No. Response	*%*	*Activity*
103	**96. 3**	**Consultation with other teachers**
95	88. 8	Developing modified curriculum
102	95. 3	Providing remedial inst/adapted curric.
98	91. 6	Providing remedial inst/alternate mat.
76	71. 0	Specific skills instruct.-independence
89	83. 2	Strategies instruction for classroom
74	69. 1	Pre-Teaching concepts / vocab
101	94. 4	Assisting with assignments
27	25. 2	Other

Other Factors (Some)

- Providing materials to classroom teachers and parents
- Assisting ESL students with academic English
- Personal organization skills/Homework strategies / Home Programs
- Re - teaching activities eg., vocabulary and concepts
- Providing novels on tape / Scribes / Readers
- Peer tutoring
- Providing oral exams/exam taking skills/study skills
- Computer technology (" Success Maker " / C.A.I / S.O.L.O.)
- Sensory Motor integration
- ESL monitoring/providing curriculum survival skills
- Cooperative Groups
- Providing enrichment materials

Learning Assistance - Assessment Strategies

DETERMINING INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEED (Refer to Table 14).

- Sample schools were asked to indicate assessment strategies accessed or used by L.A. Teachers to determine individual student service need :
    - 86 % of those responding indicated they accessed Psychological Assessment either sometimes or frequently in order to determine student service need.
    - 21 % of those responding indicated they rarely or never access such assessments to determine service need. This should be linked to the many comments made during the review about the inability to access such services (long waiting lists for assessments; major delays of a year or more; absence of the service in some school districts).
    - From the information supplied it is clear that L.A. Teachers rely heavily (78 % - frequently; 19 % sometimes) on Informal Teacher-Designed Assessment/Observation Instruments.
    - 66 % of those responding indicated they used or accessed Group Standardized (Curriculum - Criterion Referenced) Assessments to determine individual student service need. (27 % frequently and 39 % sometimes). Many offered qualifying comments that such

assessment information was used primarily for initial screening purposes only.

- It is also clear that L.A. Teachers rely heavily (61 % frequently; 33 % sometimes) on Individual Standardized Achievement Instruments to determine individual student service need.

TABLE 14
ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES - DETERMINING SERVICE NEED
Number Of Schools Responding : 115

ASSESS	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Frequently*	%
Psyc Assess.	24	21	52	45	39	34
Informal Tch.	3	3	22	19	90	78
Grp Stand.	39	34	45	39	31	27
Ind Stand.	7	6	38	33	70	61

DETERMINING INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PROGRESS (Refer to Table 15).

- Sample schools were asked to indicate assessment strategies accessed or used by L.A. Teachers to determine individual student progress :

  - 78 % of those responding indicated they rarely or never use or access Psychological Assessments in order to assess student progress.
  - 22 % indicated they did use or did access such assessments either sometimes (19 %) or frequently (8 %).
  - Results indicate that L.A. Teachers rely heavily (87 % frequently; 11 % sometimes) on Informal - Teacher- Designed Assessment/Observation Instruments.
  - 62 % of those responding indicated they used or accessed Group Standardized (Curriculum - Criteria - Referenced) Assessments to determine student progress (23 % frequently; 39 % sometimes). Many offered qualifying comments that such assessment information was not used alone but rather was placed beside other assessment information.
  - It is also clear that L.A. Teachers rely heavily (46 % frequently; 37 % sometimes) on Individual Standardized Achievement Instruments to determine student progress.

TABLE 15
ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES - DETERMINING STUDENT PROGRESS
Number Of Schools Responding : 114

ASSESS	*Rarely*	%	*Sometimes*	%	*Frequently*	%
Psyc Assess.	89	78	22	19	3	3
Informal Tch.	2	2	13	11	99	87
Grp Stand.	44	39	44	39	26	23
Ind Stand. Ach.	20	17	42	37	52	46

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Analysis of Findings

LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES - PLANNING/DOCUMENTATION

KEY QUESTIONS

- How are parents initially informed and/or consulted about L.A. support planned for their children ?
- Who is involved in planning the instructional support that students receive through the L.A. Program ?
- How does the L.A. Teacher document students' participation in the range of L.A. services provided ?
- How is ongoing student progress communicated ?
- How does the L.A. Teacher document students' progress ?
- Do record keeping practices vary according to the type and/or intensity of student participation in the L.A. Program ?
- What effect is the IEP requirement having on L.A. Teacher workload; the ability to manage student needs; the involvement of parents; the provision of service to students and; record-keeping practices ?
- What criteria should govern whether or not and L.A. Student should have an IEP ?

Informing and Involving Parents

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 16).**

- From the sample, parents are initially informed and/or consulted about support plans most frequently by telephone contact (71. 3 %), through parent and classroom teacher conferences (56. 5 %) and through parent and L.A. teacher conferences (52. 2 %).

- Information/consultation through IEP meetings ranks last in frequency of response (excluding 'Other Category'). This could be linked to the comments made throughout the review about the difficulty in getting parents to attend IEP meetings, especially during the school day.

❑ **PARENT MEETINGS (Also refer to Report Supplement 1 - Parent Meetings / Summary of Responses).**

*** Limitations of the review prevented consensus-taking or detailed response tabulations during meetings. Comments were summarized and themes noted throughout the meetings. Comments were often repeated by various participants or comments made by some were embellished, added to or acknowledged by other participants.**

- Most comments made during the parent meetings (146 participants) generally pattern the survey information. There were some opposing views (minority) in relation to how parents find out about Learning Assistance Services for students in schools :
- **For the most part** (approximately 65 %) parents indicated they were informed;

- by the classroom teacher when children are experiencing difficulty.
- earlier by the child's pre-school teacher.
- through parent-teacher interviews.
- by the L.A. teacher once the child has been referred by the classroom teacher.
- by letter from the classroom teacher.
- by letter from the classroom teacher and the principal. by telephone call from the classroom teacher.
- by telephone call from the Teacher Assistant.

- Some parents (approximately 35 %) indicated their information was largely a result of:

  - having to go to the school to find out what they were doing and what special services were available.
  - having to "fight" to access the service.
  - having to make a special request of the principal to conduct testing.
  - having to "struggle" with the classroom teacher.
  - working with family Doctor to "push" the school to action.having to initiate the school to deal with a problem that was already well-underway . . . child has to be failing
  - hearing from their child that he/she was getting 'special help'.

TABLE 16
PLANNING AND DOCUMENTATION
INFORMING / CONSULTING PARENTS ON PLANNED LA SUPPORT
Number Of Schools Responding : 115

No. Of Responses	% Response	*Activity*
42	36 . 5	IEP Meeting
55	47 . 8	Letter Home
65	56 . 5	Par / Cl TCHR Conf.
60	52 . 2	Par / LA TCH Conf.
82	1 . 3	Telephone Contact
24	20 . 9	Other

Other Factors

- Parent-Classroom Teacher-LA Teacher-Administration- Counsellor.
- Home - School Communication Book.
- Materials sent home by LA Teacher.
- Interim Reports.
- By elementary feeder schools.
- Parent presentation sessions.
- SBT meetings.
- Report Card conferences.
- Informal meetings.
- Contact by Multi-Cultural / Home-School Worker / Family Advancement Worker.

- Team meetings with Psychologist and Socaial Worker.
- Student timetable/course planning booklet.

Planning Instructional Support

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 17).**

- From the sample, the **greatest frequency** of involvement in planning instructional support for students is on the part of Learning Assistance Teachers (99. 1 %) and Classroom Teachers (93. 9 %) and the School-Based Team (74. 8 %).
- The **least frequency** of involvement was on the part of School Administrators (41. 7 %).
- Students were mentioned as being involved by 53 % of the respondents. Many respondents pointed out that this primarily occurred at the upper intermediate level and the secondary level.
- Parents were mentioned as being involved by 65. 2 % of the responding schools.

❑ **PARENT MEETINGS (Also Refer to Report Supplement 1 - Parent Meetings/Summary of Responses).**

- During the parent meetings, parents were asked whether or not they felt they had a good idea as to what the Learning Assistance Program was intended to accomplish for their children :
    - Parents indicated they had good information through :
        - IEP meetings.
        - Regular telephone updates.
        - Frequent short meetings/conversations.
        - Dropping in to the school.
        - Discussions with teacher and L.A. teacher.
        - Constant communication / notes home two-three times a week.
        - Report Cards.
        - Home Communication Books.
    - A few parents expressed concerns :
        - Not always kept informed . . . expected to 'trust the system'.
        - L.A. teachers should be bluntly honest with parents about student difficulties/needs.
        - Goals haven't really changed or haven't really been communicated for five years.
        - There is no consistency . . . program changes from year-to-year and students are 'dropped' from Learning Assistance only to be returned in following years.
        - Have to always be the 'initiators' by telephoning the school.
- Parents were also asked whether it had been relatively easy to access L.A. Services for their children :

Positive Themes that emerged :

- access was relatively easy and immediate once special needs were identified.
- really a matter of choice on the part of parents . . . if they wanted the service for their child, it was available.
- school staff were extremely helpful and supportive in making sure the child received the service.

Negative Themes that emerged :

- because of inconsistencies in Learning Assistance the parents have to be the child's advocate and 'push' for the service.
- children's difficulties are often not communicated from one teacher to another and as a result, the parent has to ensure the information is shared/conveyed from year to year.
- parents have to be watchful or vigilant in order to keep the program from year to year.
- children were refused service because they were not 'severe enough'.
- parents have to 'know the system' and 'how to use the squeaky wheel approach' in order to ensure service is provided.
- service and approach differ from school to school and largely depend on the teacher.
- there are differences from grade to grade with a lack of service continuity.
- the L.A. Program has 'disappeared' in some schools.

- Parents were asked whether or not they were provided the opportunity to participate in the planning of support services for their children and if so, the nature of this involvement. Here again there was a mixed response as typified by the following comments :

  " As a parent you have to decide what's best - you have to advocate for your child. It's like dealing with the medical community, you have to 'stay in there' . . . you have to stay involved and be up front about it. "

  " No . . . the school developed the program and it seems to work . . . it took a long time for district testing . . . need to be persistent to obtain further assessment. "

  " Yes . . . invited to participate in the planning - was asked what the goals should be for the next three months/ was invited in to the goal-setting process. "

  " Yes . . . meetings with teachers to discuss needs and to develop the program. "

  " Yes . . . and I am helping the L.A. teacher with my child's program. "

- Parents were asked whether or not their children had IEP's . . . whether or not they had a copy . . . and whether or not they were involved in setting out and monitoring the IEP :

- The responses were mixed :
    - Some parents were unaware of IEP's and what they are or whether one existed for their child.
    - Some indicated there were IEP's developed but they as parents had little or no involvement and had no copies of the IEP.
    - Most indicated there were IEP's and they were involved in the development and had copies.
    - Most indicated there were IEP's developed but they had no involvement in monitoring.
    - Some indicated there were IEP's but that they were unrealistic or unworkable and that IEP planned activities were often not carried out.
    - Some indicated they were aware of IEP's but found it difficult to participate because of lack of time to attend meetings.

TABLE 17
INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT
Number Of Schools Responding : 115

No. Of Responses	*%*	*Those Involved*
114	99 . 1	LA Teacher
108	93 . 9	Class Teacher
48	41 . 7	School Admin
86	74 . 8	SB Team
61	53 . 0	Student
52	45 . 2	Tchrs Assistant
61	53 . 0	Dist Specialist
75	65 . 2	Parent
23	20 . 0	Other

Other Factors

- Sometimes outside agencies for moderately handicapped.
- Counsellor.
- " Zone Support Teacher ".
- Sometimes medical personnel.
- " Reading Recovery " Teacher - Leader.
- Union through ' contract language '.
- Reading Tutors.

Communicating Ongoing Student Progress

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Also Refer to Report Supplement 2 - Survey Comments / Summary).**

Sample schools were asked to provide information about how ongoing student progress is communicated to students, parents, teachers and school administrators. The following provides a sample of the responses :

To Students :

- Verbally and through written assignment comments.
- Report Cards and IEP review.
- Written reports (special).
- Special awards and stickers.
- Daily informal reporting/conferences.
- Charts and graphs.
- Comparison of written work from term to term.
- 'Round Robins'.
- Sharing information in student file/assessment reports.
- Reviewing 'Individual Student Learning Plan'.
- Formally after each interim report and regular reporting period.
- Review of 'portfolio assessment'.
- Progress Logs.

To Parents :

- Verbally (meetings, conferences, telephone calls).
- Report Cards and Comments / Term Reports.
- IEP reviews/meetings.
- Bi-weekly / monthly meetings.
- Year-End Review letters.
- Notes home/ Memos attached to student work.
- Formal Reports.
- Informal Reports (written).
- Upon parent request.
- Notes in special box in office.
- Happy face awards on student work sent home.
- Review of student contracts.

To Teachers :

- School-Based Team Meetings / IEP Meetings.
- Written reports/Formal reports.
- Report Card Comments.
- Verbally (meetings, conferences, discussions).
- Bi-weekly / monthly meetings.
- Notes.
- Summaries of testing/Formal assessment reports.
- Term reports and discussions.
- Checklists of strengths/weaknesses.
- Collaborative sharing meetings.
- E-Mail.
- Copies of Letter to parents.
- Charts/Graphs.

To School Administrators :

- Report Cards and Comments / Interim Reports.

- IEP Reviews / meetings.
- Written reports / three per year.
- Verbal reports / Discussions - frequent.
- School-Based Team Meetings.
- Informal reports / notes.
- Copies of reports sent to parents / letter sent to parents.
- Having student visit principal to show work.
- Through counsellors.
- Copies of assessment results where appropriate.
- Update Team Meetings.
- Regular meetings with administration.
- Memos and Copies of SBT minutes /notes.

❑ **PARENT MEETINGS (Also Refer to Report Supplement 1 - Parent Meetings / summary of Responses).**

Parents were asked how they were informed about their childrens' progress in the L.A. Program. The following provides a sample of the responses :

- Through report cards, telephone calls, notes home.
- Through the "Communications Book" - excellent !
- Classroom teacher provides excellent feedback.
- Through the IEP.
- Through parent-teacher conferences.
- Through classroom teachers who are accessible if you want more information.
- It's not offered . . . we have to make the effort to find out what is going on.
- There is too much space between report cards.
- Regular parent-teacher interviews don't give much information.
- There needs to be almost weekly reporting for kids experiencing difficulty.

Documentation of Learning Assistance Support Services

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 18).**

- Sample schools were asked to provide information on how L.A. teachers document / record the L.A. support services provided to students :
    - IEP's were the most frequently mentioned activity of documentation (96. 4 %) followed by Working Files (92. 8 %) and Personal Notes (85. 6 %)
    - Results also provide evidence of other creative and innovative methods for documenting services :
        - tapes and portfolios.
        - special student 'packets' / booklets.
        - computerized tracking programs.
        - adaptation checklists.

TABLE 18
DOCUMENTING SERVICES PROVIDED TO LA STUDENTS
Number Of Schools Responding : 111

Responses	*%*	*Activity*
73	65 . 8	Daily Log
72	64 . 9	Special Reports / Letters
103	92 . 8	Working Files
51	45 . 9	Checklists
107	96 . 4	IEP's
95	85 . 6	Personal Notes
91	82 . 0	Daybook
25	22 . 5	Other

- Other Factors Tapes and portfolios.
- Student " Packets ".
- Intervention Plan (Pre / Post Monitoring).
- Tracking forms/Progress charts/Summative test results.
- Computer Data program.
- Student Booklet / Daily Teaching Sheet.
- SBT notes/minutes.
- " Program Previews ".
- " At Risk Students List ".
- Confidential Teacher Report Forms.
- Graphs.
- Writing Samples.
- Reading / Phonics Assessments.
- Daily Student Workbook.
- Key Work Samples.
- Adaptation Checklist.
- Assessment Reports.

Documentation and Reporting of Student Progress

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 19).**

- Sample schools were asked to provide information on how student participation and progress in the L.A. Program is documented and reported :
    - Report Card Comments were the most frequently mentioned activity (72.1 %) followed by IEP's (64. 9 %) and Anecdotal Reports (60. 4 %).
    - Responses in the 'Other Category' exhibit a wide variety of methods utilized in order to document and report student progress.

TABLE 19
DOCUMENTING / REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS
Number Of Schools Responding : 111

Responses	*%*	*Activity*
80	72 . 1	Report Card Comments
41	36 . 9	Special Reports / Letters
23	20 . 7	Checklists
40	36 . 0	Special Report Card
72	64 . 9	IEP's
67	60 . 4	Anecdotal Reports
16	14 . 4	Graphs
29	26 . 1	Other

Other Factors

- Telephone calls (mentioned many times).
- Interviews and conferences (4)
- LA File and teacher - parent meetings.
- Short Notes sent home with student.
- " Individual Student Learning Plan ".
- Computer Reports.
- Informal Tests.
- Interim Reports.
- Reports to staff (monthly).
- File Summary.
- Informal curriculum-based assessments.
- Writing Samples.
- Daily Student Rating Scale.
- " Sticky Notes ".
- Student Planners.

❑ **PARENT MEETINGS (Also, Refer to Report Supplement 1 - Parent Meetings / summary of Responses).**

- Parents were asked whether or not they were satisfied with the current progress reporting methods used by the school in relation to Learning Assistance Services. The following provide a sample of responses :

  Satisfied (Approximately 80 %) :

  - Satisfactory / adequate.
  - We get separate written reports from the L.A. teacher.
  - Yes . . . we are in contact every day.
  - Yes . . . written reports are followed up with a telephone call and if necessary, an interview.
  - Concerns between reporting periods are always addressed either by phone or in person.
  - Would like to see a continuation of the "Communication Book" at the secondary level.

  Not Satisfied (Approximately 20 %) :

- There needs to be a little more honesty in reporting.
- Communication is more direct at the elementary level.
- Have to have constant surveillance on the part of the parent.
- Need better communication vehicles at the secondary level.

Record Keeping Practices

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Figure 4).**

- Sample schools were asked whether record keeping practices vary according to the type and/or intensity of student participation in the L.A. Program.

    - As Figure 4 indicates, 83. 3 % of the respondents indicated yes . . . they do vary while 16. 7 % of respondents felt that practices did not vary . Respondents were asked to provide information about how record keeping practices vary and the following provides a sample of the 92 responses to this question :

Increased Volume (Approximately 10 % of Comments) :

- The greater the participation, the more samples of work, the more detail collected.
- Having to record more and more data.
- - Difficult to keep record keeping up to date on all LA students due to time constraints.

Nature of Report Documentation (Approximately 80 % of Comments) :

- Longer term . . . more "depth" reporting.
- Short-term students do not receive reports from L.A. Teacher.
- Transient students need more interviews and frequent write-ups for files.
- Time constraints prevent up- to- date record keeping.
- Classroom support record keeping is done by the classroom teacher.
- Ongoing L.A. students have more comprehensive files, working files, daily log record.
- 'Reading Recovery' documentation is done on a daily basis . . . others are updated monthly.
- Files are not opened for students who "drop in" for test preparation packages or occasional noon-hours/before school help with homework assignments.
- Use 'group instruction' files.
- Students with 'adaptations' have a more detailed IEP than students who only require an LA Block for support.
- Students who are worked with in class only receive comments on the regular report card.
- Reports are done collaboratively with the classroom teacher.
- Funded students have more formal "paperwork".

Supplementary Records (Approximately 5 % of Comments):

- Increase with severity of disability, particularly behaviour

disabilities (records, calls, meetings).
- Charting and graphing to motivate some students.
- Journals kept for some students.
- *Work samples kept for students who receive more extensive* program.

IEP Usage/Format/Type (Approximately 5 % of Comments):

- Differentiate between IEP and Learning Plan/Program.
- Use of 'short' and 'long' form IEP's.
- Special design "Intervention Plans' are measured and graphed.
- IEP's for students receiving 25 or more hours of service.
- Practices vary based on short or long term assistance to be provided.
- Some IEP's are limited and short ... others are longer.
- If significant adaptations are made then an IEP is developed.

FIGURE 4
VARIATION IN RECORD KEEPING PRACTICES ACCORDING TO TYPE AND / OR INTENSITY OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION
Number Of Schools Responding : 114

YES	%	NO	%
95	83 . 3	19	16 . 7

The IEP Requirement

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Report Supplement 2 - Survey Comments / Summary).**

- Sample schools were asked what affect the requirement of IEP's for students receiving 25 or more hours of L.A. services was having on L.A. teacher workload; on the ability to manage student needs/ caseload needs; on the involvement of parents; on the provision of services to students and; on record-keeping practices :

On Workload of L.A. Teachers (92 Responses):

- **Administration Time Factors (21 . 7 % of responses) :**

  Respondents related that from their perspective the requirement was leading to greatly increased time spent on program administration activities. The following provides a sample of the comments :

  - Horrendous increase to paperwork and meetings, conferences, telephone calls, etc.
  - 'Administrivia' means we can deal with fewer students.
  - Significant time needed to monitor.
  - We are forced to use 'modified' IEP's or IEP checklists' in order to manage the workload.
  - Increased time spent on administration, loss of time on direct instruction.

- **Workload Time and Complexity (27 . 2 % of responses) :**

  Respondents indicated that the requirement has generally increased their workload in terms of volume of work and complexity of work and that much of this work has to be done " after hours ". The following provides a sample of the comments :

  - Tremendously increased workload, especially at the beginning of the school year and again near the end of the year for transition planning.
  - Significantly increased 'workload stress'.
  - Causes many more meetings, etc. after school hours.
  - Not only increases L.A. teacher workload but also the workload of other teachers (meetings; documentation; etc.).
  - Impossible for small schools with minimum L.A. time allocation to handle.
  - Impossible to write IEP's on all LA students in addition to 'designated special education students' . . . and what about the gifted? These students are also addressed through the L.A. Program.

- **Instructional / Service Time Factors (21 . 7 % of responses) :**

  Respondents indicated that the requirement was taking time away from students for direct instruction. The following provides a sample of the comments :

  - A major task which takes precious time away from direct instruction of students.
  - Impossible to meet this requirement without severely affecting service to students.
  - More paper work requires extra time which results in less time to work with students.
  - Requires closing the LAC to provide time to do necessary record keeping.

- **Planning/Consultation Time Factors (12 . 0 % of responses) :**

  Respondents indicated that the requirement was seriously eroding the time available for ongoing planning and the time available for consultation with other teachers, parents, etc. The following provides a sample of the comments :

  - Takes away from 'planning time' and preparation time.
  - Significant energy and time taken up trying to involve parents as well as other agencies.
  - Difficult to meet with teachers - not enough time to meet.
  - It means more meetings with teachers and parents to discuss goals, objectives and services.

- **Neutral or No Affects on Workload (17 . 4 % of responses) :**

  Respondents indicated that the requirement had no real affect on workload beyond present practice (Of these, two respondents indicated that they are not following the requirement). The following provides a sample of the comments :

- No noticeable increase/ Not a significant difference.
- It is a bit more work initially but because our IEP's are written up as a school based team activity it means less work long term for the LA teacher.
- Unable to write IEP's with current resource and staffing levels.
- We ignore this requirement.

On Ability To Manage Student Needs / Caseload (85 Responses) :

Positive Responses : 17 (20 . 0 %

Negative Responses : 60 (70 . 6 %)

Neutral Responses : 8 (9 . 4 %)

Positive Themes :

- It makes it easier to monitor goals and progress.
- It makes us more aware of needs.
- It leads to improved documentation and planning.
- It helps to generate effective strategies.
- We prioritize the case loads within the school and allocate time accordingly and share responsibility for case management.
- We have decided to do this outside school hours so as not to affect services to students.
- Provides an excellent reference for teachers to keep some consistency in the students' academic planning.
- IEP's are a more organized approach for documenting and managing student needs than past methods... they increase efficiency and communication among all the stakeholders.

Negative Themes :

- Reduces instructional time / LA time and the number of students who can be served.
- Too much to do and not enough time to do it.
- Puts you behind in assessing the needs of students at the beginning of each semester.
- Can only manage a limited number competently.
- It takes away from planning/collaboration time with teachers.
- With 10 % of the population needing LA support we are always over subscribed.
- Delays service to kids at the beginning of the school year . . . because the L.A. teacher is busy doing paperwork requirements.
- If I were to meet the requirement I wouldn't have time to work with the students for whom the IEP's were written.
- I'm not sure IEP's are necessary...they require a lot of paperwork.
- Increased time on paperwork,filing,record-keeping ... decreased time for preparation ... and at times decreases the number of students seen.
- Time spent developing IEP's takes time away from time that could be spent in direct instruction.
- Creates more meetings.
- . Increases time spent outside of instructional hours-writing reports, consultations, parent meetings and time for planning daily programs

decreases.

Neutral Responses :

- No problem / Minimal.
- Not a significant difference / Affect has been negligible / No change.
- Has made little difference since IEP's are usually written out of class time.

On Parent Involvement (85 Responses) :

Positive Responses : 42 (49 . 4 %)

Negative Responses : 30 (35 . 3 %)

Neutral Responses : 13 (15 . 3 %)

Positive Themes :

- Definitely has increased parent involvement.
- Helps to build trust.
- Has increased time spent with parents which is a very positive feature.
- Helps to set out 'clear expectations' of all concerned.
- Generally positive although at times it is difficult to find time for the meetings . . . the reality is that many families work hours that don't 'mesh' with school hours.
- Parents are provided with much more information.
- Ensures parents are contacted and informed and have an understanding of the interventions.
- Encourages consistent help at home.
- Certainly has helped get the parents in the school.
- In some cases it helps to reassure parents.
- Improves the parent-school relationship.
- Parents become more actively involved in their child's progress because they have greater input and a role to play in the overall success of the plan.

Negative Themes :

- Often have to handle over the telephone, by letter or 'after the fact'.
- Not all parents wish to participate in the meetings.
- We continue to experience very little parent involvement . . . can't get them to come in for discussions/meetings.
- Fifty percent (50 %) of parents don't even show up to sign the IEP's, even after repeated requests for them to do so.
- Absolutely impossible to manage the time to do this.
- No impact on the involvement of parents except - more paper work and less time to meet.
- If I met with parents to plan and review the " required IEP's " there would be no time to see a student.
- It is not possible to involve parents directly in the writing of 15 IEP's in a time allocation of 7 . 5 hours per week.

Neutral Responses :

- We see no noticeable change to parent involvement.
- The requirement has had little impact / minimal impact.

- It has made little difference.
- . It is about the same as before... we had good support before the IEP requirement.
- Parents are involved in a similar way regardless of the 25 hour requirement.

On Provision Of Service To Students (74 Responses) :

Positive Responses : 26 (35 . 1 %)

Negative Responses : 39 (52 . 7 %)

Neutral Responses : 9 (12 . 2 %)

Positive Themes :

- Great ... keeps you on track.
- Provides clear guidelines and plan for students.
- . Has positive impact on service to students in class when teacher uses suggested adaptations.
- . The brainstorming and shared responsibility combined with the setting of review dates helps to ensure a more effective service.
- Clarifies roles, responsibilities and goals for all concerned.
- . The service to students has improved because there is a team of involved people planning and charting the child's development.
- IEP's help to provide more focused and individualized instruction.
- Ensures accountability.
- Students find some reassurance that their academic expectations are clear.
- It ensures follow-up from year-to-year (record of service).

Negative Themes :

- . Reduces time for direct service/instruction... less time to work with and teach students.
- Can impact on the time available to students in upper grades where caseload exceeds amount of teacher time assigned.
- Direct service time to students has been reduced.
- Takes time away from primary focus ... helping students be successful.
- More time on paperwork/meetings reduces the amount of time available for teaching.
- Means more work after hours.
- Longer waiting lists, shorter timeframe to work with kids.
- Takes time away from students and the preparation of materials.
- May be influencing the grouping of students (as opposed to individualized attention).

Neutral Responses :

- Little affect / No effect at this school / Negligible affect / No impact.
- We would still have serviced these students.
- Same service ... it is hoped... No significant difference.... No change.

On Record Keeping Practices (83 Responses) :

Positive Responses : 31 (37 . 4 %)

Negative Responses : 42 (50 . 6 %)

Neutral Responses : 10 (12 . 0 %)

Positive Themes :

- Improves records/update.
- Increases accountability for accurate records.
- Increases accountability for service.
- Leads to better organization.
- We have ours computerized which helps greatly.
- Allows for better monitoring of goals/progress.
- Must be brief, yet efficient due to numbers.
- Increased time but more thorough records.
- Provides a format for documentation but needs to be streamlined.
- Record-keeping practices have improved because IEP's provide a more systematic and accountable approach to following an individual's progress through school.

Negative Themes :

- Increased workload-more paper work... especially after hours.
- More data is collected and filed . . . L.A. rooms become overcrowded with files/paper.
- Increases documentation significantly.
- Creates an unmanageable amount of paper work and files.
- Makes record-keeping impossible.
- Have to do more record-keeping outside of school hours (evenings/weekends).
- Spend more time documenting.
- We dream of having technology one day that will assist in this procedure.
- Decreased efficiency ... more time consuming than useful.
- Detracts from planning.

Neutral Responses :

- Hasn't affected a great deal . . . I have a file of each student receiving LA help anyway.
- Has made little difference . . . day plans and notes are still kept.
- Generally the same.
- Not much, I would be keeping records whether the student has an IEP or not.

❑ **SCHOOL VISITS (Also Refer to Report Supplement 1 - School Visits / Summary of Responses).**

- During the school visits (30 schools - 78 participants) the same question was explored and the responses were very similar / very consistent with those provided in the survey document. Some sample comments are provided to highlight this consistency :

  Workload Issues / Themes :

  - Much has to be done in the evenings . . . . try not to take away from student time.

- We use two distinct forms . . . . a short form for L.A. and a long form for 'designated students' . . . we consider the IEP as a 'working document' and refer to it constantly.
- At least 15 % of my time is taken up with the administration of the IEP requirement . . . . this cuts into the time available for direct service.
- I would have to do 45 - 50 IEP's . . . I'm currently doing 20 - 25 and am having trouble keeping up
- Horrendous workload . . . especially when operating on a Quarter System . . . as a result we don't do IEP's for L.A. students (we're not required to do so ?).
- It is not a big issue . . . we have an IEP format on computer disk.
- Takes considerable time . . . especially in September and then again in May and June . . . with much time spent in the evenings and on weekends . . . often service is delayed at the start of the school year because of all the paperwork required.
- Increases the workload - have to do the paperwork, the team meetings, parent meetings, reviews, etc.
- I've done over 30 IEP's this year . . . it is a job that goes to the bottom of the priority list.
- I just don't do IEP's . . . I don't have the time . . . students are the responsibility of the classroom teacher and I follow programs for them . . . I do full reports on students for each reporting period.
- The IEP process is time-consuming and difficult . . . it is tough to coordinate with all the teachers involved . . . and with the parents.

Managing Student Needs / Caseload :

- All but one of our teachers have indicated that they find the IEP valuable and useful.
- It is tying up professionals to do paperwork and we can't keep up to referrals.
- The paperwork should not interfere with the time the teacher has with the student.
- How do you always know that the child is going to require 25 hours of service ? . . . this will depend on individual progress and ongoing assessment . . . and could lead to formal IEP's <u>after the fact</u>!

Parent Involvement :

- It is helping to involve and better inform parents . . . but there are other ways this can be accomplished.
- It does make parents feel 'wanted' and a part of it all.
- Parental involvement is good and the IEP requirement has had no impact.
- The IEP process demands a higher involvement of parents.
- In some ways it makes parents more nervous as it seems so formal.
- Most parent contact is by phone at this level.
- Gives parents a chance to come in to express their concerns and allows them to give input.
- Parents are more willing to call and to keep in contact as a result of IEP meetings.

Service to Students :

- It helps students by keying them into the program and it lets them give input . . . it lets them know results which they really do want to know.
- Serves a valuable purpose in the transition planning for students.

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Also Refer to <u>Report Supplement 1</u> - District Interviews / Summary of Responses).**

- During the interviews with school district administrators they were asked whether or not the schools in their district were following the IEP requirements set out by the Ministry. Responses were mixed :

1. Some indicated that all schools were following the requirements.
2. Others indicated that requirements were being met at the elementary level but that it was uncertain whether the requirements were being followed at the secondary level.
3. Some indicted that requirements were being met for the most part.
4. Others indicated that the requirements were being met for 'designated students' but there was uncertainty about L.A. students.
5. Some indicated that requirements were being followed but that short-form IEP's were being utilized.
6. Others indicated that some of the district schools were definitely not meeting the requirements but that overall approximately 70 % of the schools were meeting the requirements.

- During the district interviews participants were also asked how the school district monitors the IEP requirements. The following responses emerged :

  - There are District Master Files for 'high incidence' students . . . these files are housed in the schools and the district expectation is that principals will monitor these.
  - We conduct 'spot checks' and this is also monitored at School-Based Team meetings.
  - We don't monitor . . . but we plan to implement a process through the school-based team.
  - Principals 'sign-off' a form for all 'designated' students and we expect them to ensure the requirement is met for L.A. students as well.
  - We monitor through our regular meetings with special education staff in the district.
  - For Learning Assistance there is no monitoring in the sense that IEP's are filed centrally . . . informally, it is noted that IEP's are there and that principals have the responsibility.
  - We keep a 'special needs' list at each school which is updated three times a year and IEP's are sent in to the Student Services Department.
  - Monitoring occurs through the Director of Special Services but the 'first line' is the school principal who sees every IEP and in fact, is often involved in the development of IEP's.
  - The Principal has the responsibility and it is monitored every two years by the Assistant Superintendent.
  - We monitor through our 'internal special program audit process'.

Suggested Criteria for Development of IEP's

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Report Supplement 2 - Survey Comments / Summary).**

- Sample schools were asked to suggest criteria that should govern whether or not a Learning Assistance student should have an IEP.

  There were 125 suggestions offered :

  Time Criteria (24 Suggestions) (19 . 2 %) :

  Responses varied from agreement with the current " 25 hours or more " criteria (14 responses) to a suggestion that service should be more than 50 hours before an IEP should be required. A key factor noted was that the IEP should only be required for longer term intervention / support - programming.

  Student Needs Criteria (46 Suggestions) (36 . 8 %) :

  The following provides a sample of the suggestions offered :

  - Where the student is one or more years behind expectations or where intervention has been tried and assessed.
  - If the child is significantly below grade level expectations as indicated by a psychological assessment.
  - If student cannot meet curriculum and/or classroom goals.
  - Student consistently experiencing failure.
  - Student functioning outside of widely held expectations.
  - Only if the student's program needs to be closely monitored or the student has been placed on a 'wait list' for the Resource Room program for 'designated students'.
  - Should be based on the severity of a student's difficulties not on the number of hours of service to be provided.
  - Where the student has many problems (social; emotional; academic; behavioural) or where there is multi-agency involvement or multi-personnel involvement (Speech Pathologist; School Psychologist; OT/PT, etc.).

  Program Criteria (28 Suggestions) (22 . 4 %) :

  The following represents a sample of the suggested criteria :

  - Where intervention has been tried and assessed.
  - Where more aggressive programming is required.
  - If the program is significantly different from the classroom program and involves 25 hours or more of special instruction.
  - Where the program requires major adaptations/modifications.
  - Where major adaptations to instruction are required.
  - Where classroom materials have to be significantly modified.
  - Completely individualized program needed.
  - Where LA instruction will be different from that of the classroom.
  - If expected learning outcomes need to be significantly altered.
  - If the student's program differs greatly from the regular classroom program in one or more areas.

Criteria - " Designated Students Only " (20 Suggestions) (16 . 0 %) :

These responses indicated that there should be no requirement for IEP's for LA students and that IEP's should only be required for " designated special education students " (designated funding categories - Ministry definitions / guidelines).

Criteria / Determined by Individual Schools (7 Suggestions) (5 . 6 %) :

These responses indicated that the determination of whether or not a student requires an IEP should be up to the school and more specifically, up to the School-Based Team to decide.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Analysis of Findings

LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES - FINDING OUT ABOUT RESULTS

KEY QUESTIONS

- How is the effectiveness of Learning Assistance monitored ?
- What indicators of success are used to monitor the effectiveness of the Learning Assistance Program ?
- What are Learning Assistance teachers providing to students and classroom teachers that 'works' ?
- What evidence exists in the school / district that illustrates / confirms student progress, parent satisfaction, or other measures of efficacy ?

Monitoring the Effectiveness of Learning Assistance

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 20).**

- From the sample, it appears that service monitoring largely occurs through :
  - School-Based Team Review Meetings (78. 3 %)
  - IEP Reviews (77. 4 %)
  - Follow-up Assessments (70. 8 %)
- Just over half of the sample schools indicate that they conduct internal program evaluations.
- The sample schools have indicated that they employ a wide range of monitoring activities and this is further confirmed by examining the 'Other Monitoring' activities listed in Table 20.

TABLE 20
MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING ASSISTANCE
Number Of Schools Responding : 106

No. Of Responses	*%*	*Activity*
82	7 . 4	IEP Reviews
75	70 . 8	Follow-Up Assessments
24	22 . 6	Program Eval (External)
20	18 . 9	Teacher Questionnaires
83	78 . 3	SBTeam Review Meetings
57	53 . 8	Program Eval (Internal)
51	48 . 1	School Accred Results
13	12 . 3	Parent Questionnaires
25	23 . 6	Other

Other Factors

- Teacher - parent - student feedback.
- Parental interviews.
- LA Study (Thesis).
- Classroom teacher consultations.
- Discussion at " staff committee " meetings or Department meetings.
- Daily teacher consultation.
- Frequent short-term collaborative meetings with administration.
- Teacher Evaluation Report on LA Teacher by Principal.
- Student questionnaires (secondary level).
- Year - End LAC Report.
- Tri-Annual Report of LAC Services.
- Year-End Consultations and Summaries.
- Results of Standardized Student Assessments.
- Administrator confidence and support.
- District Review Meetings.
- Extent of service demand.
- Area Resource Committee/Panel.

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interviews / Summary of Responses) (10 Interviews).**

- Participants were asked how the school district monitors the overall effectiveness of the Learning Assistance Program.

No.	Responses
2	There is no district monitoring . . . . this is a school responsibility.
2	There are no specific program evaluations in Learning Assistance . . . but L.A. is looked at as part of the school accreditation process.
1	Every three years we do a complete review (curriculum; service delivery model; instructional setting; processes; adequacy of services).
1	Because of the scope and complexity of the Learning Assistance Program there is no 'neat' way to monitor . . . but feedback from clients and parents is positive.
1	The district doesn't do this - the schools do - its' the responsibility of the principal.
1	There are no accountability measures for decisions made around L.A. at the school level . . . there is no program evaluation.
1	We run an 'internal audit process' and as schools go through accreditation there is further review of Learning Assistance programs/services.
1	We rely on School-Based Teams to monitor the service.

❑ **PARENT MEETINGS (Refer to Report Supplement 1 - Parent Meetings / Summary of Responses).**

- Parents were asked whether from their perspective the Learning Assistance

Program was successfully helping their children to progress and how they knew this.

Parents expressed many positive comments in this regard. While there was some frustration expressed about service access and continuity they did indicate appreciation for the work of L.A. teachers in helping their children. The following provides a sample of their comments :

- Definitely . . . . our child's level of concentration has improved . . . she is making good progress.
- Yes . . . we can see from the work being done . . . and our child is enjoying school . . . we see a great improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Learning Assistance gave my son a personal contact at the high school . . . he can now read what he writes.
- The L.A. teacher has made my son feel smart . . . his reading has improved.
- Yes! . . . especially when the program is started early.
- Yes . . . and we know this from teacher comments . . . report cards. . . a reading diary . . . and the Home Communication Book.
- Lack of consistency from year to year is disturbing . . . there is so much inconsistency in methodology.
- Not in the elementary years . . . you can't address a group of childrens' individual needs in a fifteen minute block.

* Parents were also asked whether or not they were asked to participate in evaluating the Learning Assistance Program and if so, how they participated. Almost unanimously the participants indicated that they were not asked to participate in evaluating the program. They expressed a desire to be part of such an activity which they felt to be important and needed.

Indicators of Success

❑ **SURVEY RESULTS (Refer to Table 21).**

- Sample schools were asked to provide information about the indicators of success used to monitor the effectiveness of the Learning Assistance Program.

  - The **greatest frequency** of response was for the indicator, "Student Achievement Results" (95. 3 %) followed by "Student IEP Goals Met" (94. 3 %) and "Student Satisfaction" (90. 6 %).
  - The **lowest frequency** of response was for the indicator, "Extent of Student Self-Referral" however, this must be interpreted within the context of a survey which was completed by both elementary and secondary schools . . . and in light of comments made by respondents about student self-referral occurring where it is appropriate (eg., sometimes at the upper intermediate level).
  - The indicator, "Student Exit Criteria" ranked seventh (7th) in frequency of response. This is could be due to some having interpreted "Student IEP Goals Met" to mean that exit criteria had been met.
  - Respondents also provided 'Other Indicators' which could also be valuable in monitoring program effectiveness (See Table 21).

TABLE 21
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS MONITORING LA PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS
Number Of Schools Responding : 106

Responses	%	Indicator
101	95 . 3	Student Achievement Results
51	48 . 1	Keeping Students In School
100	94 . 3	Student IEP Goals Met
39	36 . 8	Student Exit Criteria
96	90 . 6	Student Satisfaction
78	73 . 6	Teacher Satisfaction / Surveys
60	56 . 6	Parent Satisfaction / Surveys
30	28 . 3	Extent Student Self-Referral
22	20 . 8	Other

Other Factors

- Teacher feedback (eg., " improved behaviour ").
- Changes to student progress - term marks in regular classes.
- Placement in appropriate programs within the school or community.
- Support of other students volunteering as peer tutors for LA students.
- Grad/Post Grad success & placement.
- Student Survey results.
- Level of teacher referrals.
- Improving student attendance or behaviour.
- Student independence / task completion.

❑ **DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (Refer to Report Supplement 1 - District Interviews / Summary of Responses).**

- Participants were asked whether evidence exists in the schools and/or the school district that illustrates or confirms student progress, parent satisfaction, or other measures of program/service efficacy.

  The following provides a sample of the responses :

  - We don't really have any 'hard evidence'.
  - We have 'tracking results' related to student retention and student progress.
  - Some of our schools produce summative reports related to the progress of L.A. students.
  - We have IEP update meetings where teachers voice their feelings of satisfaction . . . we also have the results of achievement testing

and we have parent feedback which indicates a high level of satisfaction at the elementary level.
- The accreditation process in schools addresses this . . . . results have been positive.
- We have evidence that appears in our Comprehensive Report On Special Programs, which is conducted every three years.

❑ **TEACHER MEETINGS (Refer to <u>Report Supplement 1</u> - Teacher Meetings / Summary of Responses).**

- Participants were asked to provide information on what Learning Assistance teachers were providing to students and classroom teachers that "works" . . . . that positively affects student learning outcomes and the following is a sample of their responses :

  - Direct and immediate feedback to students.
  - Teaching in small "chunks".
  - Advocacy for students experiencing difficulty.
  - Skill development (primary).
  - Providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment.
  - Using small group instruction out of the regular classroom.
  - Providing resources/materials to parents.
  - In-class support emphasis but with some specific short-term 'pull-out'.
  - Assessment on a regular basis.
  - Tutoring support . . . after school drop-in / peer tutoring.
  - Coordination, collaboration and consultation through the School-Based Team.
  - Strategies to facilitate optimum implementing modalities.
  - Providing adaptations/modified programs that actually work in the regular classroom.
  - Co-teaching model (Regular Teacher - L.A. Teacher)
  - Providing a 'sounding board' . . . empathetic listening/understanding . . . to/of the regular classroom teacher.
  - More immediate and individualized instruction.
  - Program adaptations/modifications that meet student-specific needs (ie., scribing, computer programs, time considerations, exam adaptations, etc.).
  - Providing 'relief' to the classroom teacher by taking the 'regular class' while he/she works with some of the L.A. students.
  - Participants were also asked to share what they considered to be evidence of Learning Assistance positively affecting student outcomes :
  - Results of pre and post-testing using individual norm-referenced tests/ achievement tests.
  - Positive anecdotal information coming back from regular classroom teachers and parents.
  - Kids being happy to come to L.A.
  - Level of student self-referral.
  - Increased attendance rates / Lower drop-out rates.
  - Monitoring of report card marks/term marks shows real progress.
  - Positive attitudes of student (increase) and obvious growth in self-confidence.
  - Lower teacher stress rates.
  - Extent of teacher referrals/demand-increase.

- The number of children integrated into the classroom.
- Teachers actually incorporating alternate teaching strategies.
- Increased school completion rates.
- Positive feedback from students, parents and teachers.
- Positive perception of the Learning Assistance Centre within the school.
- Service is highly utilized and in demand . . . length of the waiting list.
- Students meeting exit criteria and returning to regular classroom activity.
- Students bring other students in for help.
- When strategies transfer across settings.
- Other students wanting to be Peer Tutors for L.A. students.

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)
CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

The school survey as well as the school visits, district interviews and meetings with teachers and parents, all explored the changes and the challenges associated with the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What positive changes have occurred in relation to the Learning Assistance Program over the last several years ?
- What challenges have emerged in relation to the Learning Assistance Program ?
- Within existing resources, how could the way Learning Assistance Services are delivered be enhanced or improved ?

POSITIVE CHANGES

Participants were asked to provide their views on positive changes that have occurred in relation to the Learning Assistance Program. **They offered 172 responses to this question.** While a detailed summary of responses can be found in the Report Supplement (2), it is important to highlight some of these responses in order to provide a 'change snapshot'.

From the Survey (105 Responses) - Common Themes

- There is now more communication between classroom teachers and Learning Assistance teachers with collaborative planning and consultation... also more communication between teachers,students, parents and administrators.
- The School-Based Team concept and the involvement of the team in collaborative decision-making . . . . a support team approach at the school level where everyone assumes 'ownership'.
- More and more Learning Assistance teachers hold special qualifications for their assignment . . . and professional development and inservice training activities are improving and are being provided more often.
- More flexible/adaptable delivery models now - according to individual school needs.
- The introduction and utilization of computer technology and programs like "Success Maker", "SOLO", "Plato" and "Pathfinder".
- Improved testing/assessment techniques and assessment materials/instruments.
- Improved record keeping practices.
- The administration seems to value the service more.
- The L.A. teacher now teaches students rather than marking exercises and supervising the students . . . L.A. teachers are now used as special resource persons.
- Change from a remediation centre to a collaborative/support model for students, teachers and parents.
- Classroom teachers are now more open to collaboration so Learning Assistance services enhance classroom output instead of being viewed as a separate program . . . more focus on 'strategies' than on delivery of a 'separate program'.
- Our staff is starting to better understand the needs of "slow learners".
- Flexibility to offer small group instruction/classes . . . the development of

special programs/support for 'at-risk' students.

- Recognition now, that Teacher Assistants are a necessary and valuable component to L.A. programs.
- The 'Reading Recovery Program' has had a huge positive impact.
- Having the consistency of the same L.A. teacher two years in a row. . . so critical to a small school.
- Clearer idea of the development and use of IEP's.
- The contribution of the Peer Tutor Program.
- Perhaps the most significant is the increase in classroom teacher support as their student population has become much more diverse. . . they need someone who's judgement they trust to 'zero in' on student needs so they can use their limited contact time with the student to the maximum benefit.
- We now know more about language acquisition, how the brain works, learning disabilities, AD/HD, FAS, etc.
- We consider the change to accommodate "drop-in L.A." to be very positive.
- Continuity across the district, clarifying of policy and referral process, district focus and development of early intervention reading programs have brought great success.

From the School Visits (30 Responses) - Common Themes

- The 'resource model' is a strength . . . giving kids intensive service for a short time really works.
- The School-Based Team is excellent . . . . power of getting everyone together pays off.
- The 'Learning Centre' approach . . . small groups "drop-in" program . . . student self-referral.
- The school can determine the appropriate staff 'mix' . . . there are no collective agreement prohibitions.
- There is now a strong assessment component and excellent tracking of students.
- The 'case manager' approach has made a real difference in terms of coordination and accountability.
- The advent of Peer Tutoring . . . and Peer Mediation.
- Early intervention approaches, especially within a community school model.
- Our program for 'release time' for teachers to attend School-Based Team meetings.
- Our district's training and qualifications criteria for the hiring and assignment of L.A. teachers.
- Our "Communication Book" that follows each child.
- The team approach. . . . time-tabled together . . . for service and meetings/consultation. . . sharing 'cases'.
- Our school-wide screening program (whole grades each year). Supportive staff - good at providing assignments for the kids to work on in L.A.
- There is a counsellor (. 6) who works as part of the School-Based Team . . . and this has made a huge difference.
- Flexibility is positive . . . enables teachers to help kids in the best way for them - they can be 'pulled out' or can receive service in class.
- A positive change is serving kids as to their educational needs rather than the pre-determined 'label'.
- Teacher support is very positive - teachers can timetable so they have support - teachers give a little in terms of when they timetable math, for example, so that they can have in-class support.
- L.A. is now part of the entire school, not just a separate remedial program.
- Teachers don't simply see L.A. as just a removal of kids from the classroom .

. . it is an integral part of everything that goes on in the school.
- The "Reading Buddies" component is a very positive feature. Parents are excellent in terms of support - they are good at volunteering . . . consistently.
- The move to a 'preventative' approach has made a big difference.

From the Teacher Meetings (24 Responses) - Common Themes

- The School-Based Team concept and shared 'ownership' for providing services to students.
- Students no longer see L.A. as the place where the "dummies" go. . . they are eager to participate and love coming to the LAC.
- Emphasis on early intervention and early literacy programs is a real improvement . . . proactive.
- There is now a culture of support in schools.
- Much improved communication between classroom and the home. Support provided to the classroom teacher (as opposed to 'pull-out' programs).
- Much improved 'transition processes' (collaborative; program-skill information; student progress reports and records; sharing strategies, etc.).
- Having the L.A. teacher as the school coordinator for all special programs . . . chairing School-Based Team.
- Peer Tutoring becoming a valuable component of L.A. services.
- Assistance to classroom teachers (strategies; materials; adaptations-modifications) . . . providing diagnostic services . . . taking pressure off teachers. . . providing 'sounding board' for teachers.
- The move to in-class support model . . . meeting the needs of students in their regular classrooms.
- Having opportunities for collaboration between L.A. teacher and classroom teachers instead of being fully 'blocked in'.
- The ongoing inservice program provided/organized by the school district.
- L.A. has become a 'communal source of information' on kids . . . . and there is continuity of information from year to year.

From the District Interviews (13 Responses) - Common Themes

- Services have become much more individualized . . . the move away from the 'pull-out' model and the move toward the resource model and classroom consultation and support provided in classrooms.
- Planning has improved considerably . . . as has progress reporting and parental involvement.
- There has been a significant improvement in the provision of inservice programs.
- School administrators are now much more knowledgeable about special education and are very supportive of a service they value.
- There is less stigma attached to L.A. and students are much more receptive to participating in the programs, for example, at the secondary school level.
- The move to the "seamless model" and the full service school concept.
- The Learning Assistance Teachers' Association is now a lot more active . . . there seems to be more energy . . . overall level of knowledge is improving.
- Having L.A. teachers chair and provide leadership on School-Based Teams.
- The move at the school level to work collaboratively in relation to special education programs so that students and teachers receive the best service.
- The service delivery is now adjusted to what suits students and teachers.

EMERGING CHALLENGES

Participants were asked to provide information on what they perceived to be challenges that have emerged in relation to the Learning Assistance Program. Responses were very consistent throughout the review. Some Common highlights are presented here :

SCHOOL SURVEY (135 Responses) - Common Themes

Nature of the Students :

- The nature of special needs students is changing dramatically . . . more diverse . . . more complex. . . (socio-economic problems; emotional -behavioural problems; single-parent families; dual working families; language deficits - lack of readiness skills; FAE/ FAS; AD/HD, etc.).
- The changes to the Ministry criteria . . . 'kicking out' of the SLD category . . . not recognizing 'borderlines' or the 'grey area' kids which have all increased the pressure on Learning Assistance.
- Balancing intellectual and emotional needs of students is an increasing demand and definitely a challenge.
- The growing number of self-referrals from students (secondary) experiencing difficulties . . . the challenge is in ensuring all students requesting support are given attention... so we don't lose them.

Model / Service Delivery :

- The "seamless model" when due to lack of resources, L.A. must provide service to the whole range of students (LA; ESL; Gifted; Low-Incidence; Behaviour).
- The "seamless model" when L.A. students are not served because L.A. is having to deal with 'designated students'.
- Learning Assistance teachers supervising, coordinating and directing Teacher Assistants.
- Where one Learning Assistance teacher has an assignment covering several special needs areas or is assigned to several schools to provide service. Combining Learning Assistance and Resource Room resources/ services.
- The need to clear up a 'backlog of assessments needed' and to keep assessments current. The dependency that is sometimes developing between special needs students and teachers who show that they care . . . hard to get the student settled with other teachers . . . similar dependency issue between some special needs students and their Teacher Assistant.
- Trying to meet IEP criteria when parents or outside agency personnel can't or won't cooperate or be involved.
- Assessment tools need to be re-designed for the increasing number of children from other cultures.

Environment :

- The constant changing of personnel from year to year - 'bumping' . . . . alternate assignments, etc.
- Inadequate physical space in schools to conduct L.A. program.
- Trying to provide effective service within union contract language (specified number of seats, etc.).

Time Factors :

- Trying to involve parents . . . to meet their schedules . . . fit in meeting times, etc.

- Trying to keep up to IEP requirements even where we agree they are needed and useful.
- 'Overload' of both L.A. teachers and classroom teachers . . . lack of time. . . to meet and plan and consult . . . to complete required paper- work. . . to implement strategies.
- Lack of consultation time which weakens the 'in-class consultative model' or forces the model to remain 'pull-out'.
- Keeping the School-Based Team operating effectively while coping with time and budget pressures.
- Trying to cope with the ever-increasing paper-work and record- keeping demands.
- Time constraints for meetings, collaboration, direct service, training of new staff, meeting parental input expectations, etc.

Resources :

- More students being referred than ever before with, in many cases, less L.A. time to deal with this phenomenon (either no increase in L.A. time in schools to keep up with the increased caseload demands or, in some cases, outright reductions to L.A. time allocations at the school level to accommodate funding reductions).
- Trying to meet parent demands/expectations that are exceeding the allotted L.A. time in the school.

Personnel Factors :

- Trying to head off administrative decisions to have LA teachers provide ' relief time ' for administrative officers or for teachers to cover their preparation time.
- The Learning Assistance teacher having to be the specialist across a wide range of special needs areas.
- Communication of effective approaches to other colleagues (sharing) and to classroom teachers continues to be a challenge.
- Ensuring that all Teacher Assistants have the necessary skills, attitudes-qualifications.
- Trying to be a 'master' of all senior subjects in the secondary school in order to assist/tutor students.

SCHOOL VISITS (48 Responses) - Common Themes

Nature of the Students :

- Trying to meet the new requirements of the Ministry (IEP and more restrictive definitions for SLD and Behaviour students).
- Trying to effectively deal with the " L.A. Lifers". . . especially those that 'fall between the categories' . . . the "grey area kids".
- The significant increase in student/family transiency.
- Dealing with returning "home-schooled students" and returning students from some French programs.... who are now LA.
- Taking on additional students in the L.A. program as a result of cutbacks in other areas (SLD; ESL).

Model / Service Delivery :

- Supporting and directing Teacher Assistants.
- Transitional issues are always a challenge . . . especially related to kids moving from elementary or middle schools into the high schools.

- Psychologists/Special Counsellors can't handle the assessment demands, especially given the Ministry Guidelines/Requirements and the "threat" of audits causing districts to assess and reassess all 'designated' students with no time to assess other students.
- The continuing difficulty of getting inter-agency cooperation, involvement and support-resources.
- Trying to run the "full spectrum model". . . wide range of service provisions, including 'intensive support'.
- Time-tabling difficulties (secondary) where L.A. students may not be available at certain times.
- Need more flexibility to accommodate different learning styles, eg., it should be okay for a student to attend school for a few hours and then have access to electronic learning (secondary level).
- There is a challenge in moving away from a highly integrated model that we have in order to address life skills . . . kids need to function after they leave school.
- We have a challenge to overcome our having gone 'over the deep end' of testing and documentation.
- It is a challenge to come up with alternatives for students who can not make the regular curriculum (secondary).
- Finding out about students when files are not well documented.

Time Factors :

- Time is the key challenge - helping teachers work with 'low incidence' students.
- Consultation with classroom teachers is very difficult given time available (theirs; ours)
- The challenge of L.A. teachers having to spend a great deal of time counselling students and also parents . . . need greater access to counselling services in L.A.

Resources :

- The level of existing resources is not adequate to meet the needs/ demands . . . too few staff for the number of students requiring help . . . we can't keep up with all the referrals!
- Technology . . . we haven't come very far in using technology. . . special education seems to get the 'left overs' or gets left out entirely in terms of adequate equipment and software.
- Attempting the "inclusion model" without the appropriate level of resources . . . forcing more and more "pull-out" or separate programs in Learning Assistance.
- Trying to cope when students come to us after the Ministry enrolment/funding time periods . . . having the kids but no additional resources.
- Trying to work with an L.A. formula approach which does not pick up on the fact that some schools have a much higher incidence of L.A./special needs kids.
- The lack of resources to provide preventative programs/services. . . funding only comes once the difficulties are well-entrenched.

Personnel Factors :

- The unwillingness on the part of some teachers to deal with 'special needs' students or the lack of skills on the part of some teachers to deal with 'special needs' kids . . . fearful attitudes. . . lack of appropriate training.

- People skills are important - you have to learn to 'go with the flow' - dealing with all the teachers takes a lot of skill.

TEACHER MEETINGS (53 Responses) - Common Themes

Nature of the Students :

- L.A. has become a "catch-all" for all students with special needs.
- Overcoming a lack of continuity to the service . . . L.A. teacher assignments changing . . . L.A. teachers having to move from school to school . . . reduction in L.A. time allocations causing a re-ordering of service priorities . . . changing the nature of case- loads. . . disrupting service to some students who have to be dropped off the list.
- The typical student requiring learning assistance tends to require the ongoing support of the L.A. teacher . . . as students get older, and the curriculum becomes more complex and demanding, such students fall further and further behind, which leads to other related problem (avoidance; misbehaviour, lack of self-esteem, unwillingness to attempt or complete work).
- The increasing number of L.A. students who also require /receive support from counsellors, child and youth care workers, to help them deal with social/emotional problems.

Model / Service Delivery :

- How to work-in services to gifted children.
- At the secondary level it is virtually impossible to meet with all the teachers of an L.A. student for planning, developing strategies, etc. . . . . there is just not the time . . . and the timetable often gets in the way.
- Need for greater attention to early intervention programs . . . there should be L.A. for kindergarten kids and perhaps a return to the K - 1 program or the "protected class" approach.
- Large time-gaps between suspecting a student needs resource room support, referring, testing and eventual placement.
- Resistance to the new directions in the delivery of special education programs/services.

Time Factors :

- The paperwork required is sometimes overwhelming.
- Central administration cuts are affecting schools directly . . . less district support . . . and some ' downloading " of responsibilities/ paperwork and administration.

Resources :

- Trying to ensure a minimum standard for the allocation of L.A. teacher time in schools.
- Trying to ensure the availability of good materials for use with students and classroom teachers.
- Trying to provide alternate/remedial materials without worrying about copyright provisions.
- Lack of 'coverage time'/release time for all the required meetings.
- Learning Assistance can become a 'real dumping ground' when no other resources are available.
- Uneven level of service . . . . L.A. service is determined by the number of students in a school, not by the number of needy students per school . . .

many schools in one part of the district have a much higher need . . . and 'inner city special funding' does not give us enough money to address all these needs.

Personnel Factors :

- Protecting L.A. teachers (as 'non-enroling teachers') from district/ school staff reductions . . . we are always 'at-risk'.
- Acting as 'mentors' to new teachers takes up considerable time and energy!
- Expectations that the L.A. teacher is to act as the school coordinator for all special programs.

DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (18 Responses) - Common Themes :

Nature of the Students :

- The great divergence in students' abilities . . . the number of special needs students are growing dramatically . . . . many students coming into the system with serious language and social deficits.

Model / Service Delivery :

- Trying to ensure the implementation of "best practices" overall is a challenge . . . coordinating a program is difficult . . . especially when it is a site-based service.
- To get 'indicators of success' in place . . . to ensure accountability provisions are put in place across the district.
- The model has 'reversed' again . . . classroom teachers want to send their kids to the Learning Assistance teacher/Learning Assistance Room.
- The "inclusion issue" and the impact it is having on L.A. . . . also the challenge of trying to integrate/include kids who can't focus in regular classrooms because of distractions . . . who need the "protective environment".
- Keeping the balance between collaboration and direct service to students.
- Service delivery methodology at the high school level needs work.

Resources :

- Resource pressures related to the provision of programs for "designated students" are leading to a funding drain away from L.A. services . . . . L.A. is becoming displaced in many schools.

Personnel Factors :

- The difficulty in getting regular classroom teachers to assume responsibility and 'ownership' for all kids, including those with special needs.
- Challenge is trying to provide opportunities for training and up- grading . . . especially in districts with declining student populations and collective agreement 'bumping provisions'.
- The level of expertise now demanded of L.A. teachers . . . in a wide array of special service areas . . . this is increasing stress levels and in some cases is causing 'burn out'.

ENHANCING OR IMPROVING LEARNING ASSISTANCE

Participants were asked to suggest how Learning Assistance Services might be

enhanced or improved within existing resources. Many expressed frustration that in their perception, significant enhancements or improvements could not occur unless there was a substantial increase in the level of resources to support Learning Assistance in the schools. **(Refer to Report Supplements / for full response summaries).**

SCHOOL SURVEY (112 Responses)

There were **72** suggestions offered pertaining to enhancements or improvements **within existing resources** . Some common highlights were :

IEP Requirements :

- Only require IEP's for 'designated' students . . . allow L.A. to use short-forms, checklists, student contracts, etc.
- Re-think and relax the requirements for parent involvement in the developmental component of the IEP . . . rely instead on telephone calls and informal meetings with parents.
- Allow greater school autonomy and decrease IEP planning meetings for regular 'remedial' L.A. students.

Program / Service Delivery :

- Wherever possible have L.A. teachers based in only one school.
- Free-up time for collaboration/consultation.
- Update the research on the incidence of students requiring learning assistance and also other high incidence programs.
- Re-align resources to ensure educational technology is a priority for special education areas.
- Move from an "Itinerant Specialist' model to a school-based Resource Room format.
- Combine Learning Assistance program with the Severe Learning Disabilities program and attach one of the Teacher Assistants to the new program . . . creating more flexibility.
- Re-institute early identification/early screening programs.
- Consider 'streaming ' some students.
- The timetable could be altered in order for short support blocks to be offered to students throughout the year.
- More blending with 'special education' programs which would provide some Teacher Assistant time.
- Continue to encourage and facilitate collaboration between the L.A. teacher and classroom teachers.
- At the secondary level have L.A. teachers work in pairs so that all subject areas are covered adequately . . . also allowing one L.A. teacher to keep the center open while the other is in consultation or in the regular classroom.
- Move to a "Resource Room Model" where all special programs would work together.

Administration :

- Free-up L.A. from excessive paperwork, reports, surveys, bureaucratic procedures (district and provincial levels).
- Use technology for all record keeping administrative portions of the job to release more time for direct instruction.
- Enhance the reporting to parents (L.A. and regular classroom).
- Need to have more flexibility in the union-collective agreement/ contract

language.

- The grade 12 final exams... make them process- oriented rather than content-oriented in all subject areas.
- Bring about greater consistency in relation to personnel . . . . the same L.A. teacher from year to year.
- Engage in more internal program evaluation . . . do away with things not working . . . use resources elsewhere.
- There should be more School-Based Team meetings (at least once a month).

Personnel Factors :

- Have L.A. teachers provide classroom teacher inservice related to identification of special needs and related to alternate strategies and materials, etc.
- Provide more inservice for L.A. teachers outlining strategies for effective teaching.
- Have L.A. teachers 'network' with other L.A. teachers and with regular classroom teachers and district specialists and/or consultants.
- Teacher preparation programs should ensure that teachers are pre- pared for the workplace reality of special needs students in the classroom.
- The provision of inservice for L.A. teachers and regular classroom teachers on how to meet the needs of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties . . . use 'specialist staff' already in the district to do this.
- Making sure all L.A. teachers are properly trained and offered further professional development in new methodologies.

SCHOOL VISITS (64 Responses) - Some Common Highlights :

IEP Requirements : "

- IEP " carries a lot of baggage . . . need to come up with something that is more 'user friendly' . . . we should look at the 'spirit' of the IEP and the processes involved rather than focusing on a 'document'.
- Need greater clarification from the Ministry related to IEP's . . . what are they ? how might they vary ? different examples and templates.
- The needs of students rather than the hours for an IEP would be a better focus.

Program / Service Delivery :

- Move to a "Student Services" model . . . non-categorical resource teacher/resource team approach.
- Move to a heavier focus on working with classroom teachers . . . in classrooms.
- The Ministry needs to recognize in its guidelines and funding the distinction between elementary and secondary schools and the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.
- We need more flexibility as to how Teacher Assistants work in the school.
- More 'team teaching/cooperative teaching'.

Administration :

- Revise the district formula for L.A. staffing . . . make it a 'needs formula' giving a minimum amount of L.A. time that must be employed for this purpose.
- Needs to be a sharing of technology applications for L.A. programs/ students . . . need more services like the "Inclusion Hotline" . . . need Internet sharing . .

. eg. put IEP formats on 'Web Page'.

- The Ministry should ensure acceptance of more "adaptations/ modifications" concerning L.A. students and the writing of exams.
- The Ministry should alter its guidelines and funding to reflect the reality out in the system . . . the L.A. student and the L.A. program are "disappearing"!
- Ensure funding for L.A. and other special programs are 'clearly visible' and targeted to ensure accountability at both the district and school levels . . . otherwise funding will continue to disappear.
- Provide a standardized list of materials for French Learning Assistance.
- There is a need for modified Learning Outcomes for elective courses in secondary schools.
- Need to examine the Letter Grade issue . . . students in grade 7 who have IEP's want a report card with letter grades like their friends and peers.
- Electronic 'tracking' between school districts would be very beneficial . . . how about a 'universal software package' ?
- The Administration generally needs to have a greater awareness of what a Learning Assistance teacher can offer a school . . . LAT's should be part of the leadership team in the school.
- A Newsletter from the Ministry Special Programs Branch for Learning Assistance Teachers would be helpful in keeping teachers informed about new developments.

Personnel Factors :

- A supportive role by the Ministry in facilitating the sharing of materials and "best practice" would help.
- More opportunities for L.A. teachers to meet and share.

TEACHER MEETINGS (47 Responses) - Some Common Highlights :

IEP Requirements :

- Get rid of the IEP requirement . . . look at more appropriate ways to ensure accountability for good planning and service delivery.

Program / Service Delivery :

- More specific definition of "who is a learning assistance student".
- Emphasis should be directed to the primary school level (early intervention).
- Should have as few "pull-outs" as possible and emphasize support for the classroom teacher.
- Effective planning for transitions is still an area in need of improvement.
- Don't 'velcro' special needs students to Teacher Assistants.
- Structure regular meeting times for the teacher and the Teacher Assistant to plan - which do not impact upon the teacher's time in the classroom.
- Consider the prospect of assigning a Teacher Assistant to a teacher instead of blocks of time so that interruptions and the number of adults working with the class or student are minimized.

Administration :

- Need to critically examine how we are using all our money in the "low incidence" areas.
- The Ministry should work with school districts and schools to bring about efficiencies such as bulk purchasing of expensive assessment materials -

instruments, special needs equipment, technology, etc.
- Let teachers know how districts are being funded for special programs (the details) so they can be aware of any 'games that might be played'.
- Share resources between all support teachers (ESL; Resource Room; L.A.).
- It's important to maintain a district infrastructure for support staff in schools.

Personnel Factors :

- Need more people coming in to L.A. that have the qualifications as outlined by the Ministry.
- "Modernize" the university teacher training program.
- School Administrators should not carry a Learning Assistance assignment.
- L.A. teachers must demonstrate first, that they have been excellent classroom teachers . . . perhaps they should return to a regular class- room assignment every five years.

DISTRICT INTERVIEWS (14 Responses) - Some Common Highlights :

IEP Requirements :

- Get off the "IEP as a document kick" and instead focus on appropriate processes/methods . . . and appropriate ways to demonstrate account- ability.

Program / Service Delivery :

- Need to refocus L.A. to its original intent.

Administration :

- Ensure there is a coordinator/case manager responsible for special education programs in each school.
- Must re-examine the resources allocated or made available for proper assessment work . . . there is a crisis looming.
- Provide the funding for L.A. and 'High Incidence' in one funding 'block'.

Personnel Factors :

- Must insist on "qualifications" for L.A. teachers . . . get collective agreements out of the way of providing the best service to students.
- Wherever possible/feasible stop splitting up L.A. teachers' time and assignments.
- Tackle the training/upgrading issues . . . for classroom teachers and for L.A. teachers.
- L.A. teachers need up-to-date information on new curriculum issues- very important for making adaptations to curriculum.

PARENT MEETINGS (94 Responses) - Some Common Highlights :

Program / Service Delivery :

- Accept that children learn differently and then teach them differently. . . . kids can't be 'clumped' in a Learning Assistance class and taught the same way.
- Early intervention is critical/start programs right at the start of the year.
- Maybe we should have workshops for other kids on how some kids learn differently.
- Computers and technology should be more available in special education.

- Need consistency between schools for programming.
- Schools should work more closely with community agencies like Child Development Centres and Special Needs Pre-Schools.
- Better communication from one year to the next by teachers would help.
- The duplication of some services needs examination.
- Perhaps more grouping for instruction would be more efficient and effective.
- Change the school year - use year-round schooling so the kids don't forget so much over the summer.
- Need to follow-through more with the IEP's.
- Making all resources more accessible would help - eg., the Pathfinder Labs.
- Parents should be allowed to go in to the school to help in the classroom.
- There is a need for adequate and timely assessments.
- The home (parents) must support and follow through with the strategies that the L.A. teacher uses.
- IEP's must be realistic . . . not just 'good looking paper' . . . it would be better to focus on ensuring constant evaluation of the student's goals and frequent evaluation of strategies being used.
- There is a need to re-examine the model . . . there should be more special classes for learning disabled kids without worrying about the push for mainstreaming or inclusion.
- There is a need to look at some centralizing . . . . to get quality rather than 'watered-down' school-based services . . . re-examine the neighborhood school 'fixation'.
- More peer tutoring programs!

Administration :

- Parent brochures on available services and what to look for in terms of learning disabilities could be useful.
- Consider allowing some students to repeat grades (where it is judged most appropriate).
- Re-allocate surplus capital funds to operating budgets to allow the development of programs.
- Everyone has to make a better effort at communication - its' two-way.
- There needs to be more accountability for what teachers are doing.
- Schools need to have 'open door' policies for parents . . . parents need to feel welcome when they walk down the hallway.
- There is a need to cut down on paperwork and 'administrivia' so teachers can teach.
- Someone has to deal with policies/collective agreement provisions which are thwarting the service.

Personnel Factors :

- L.A. teachers must all be qualified - they need to have taken courses in special education; working with children who have learning disabilities.
- Try to have more empathy with parents and students when students have learning disabilities.
- Need to ensure qualifications for Teacher Assistants too.
- Need more parent education on how they can help their children.
- All teachers should have training in L.A./special Education . . . . this would certainly help with identification.
- During Pro-D days there should be more inservice for classroom teachers on special education.
- Teachers and parents must be educated about learning disabilities and work

together.

- There needs to be more sharing of successful models.

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

REVIEW IMPLICATONS

From an analysis of the review findings a number of implications emerge :

Framework for Program Direction - Learning Assistance

- There is a significant variation in how sample school districts and schools set out policies and procedures to govern the provision of Learning Assistance Services.
- In many cases, policies/procedures guidelines are somewhat dated and do not appear to reflect the significant changes that have occurred relative to the provision of Learning Assistance Services.
- Program direction is largely determined at the individual school level. How this is done varies significantly . . . from decisions made by school administrators to school staff committee decisions. A significant number of participants indicated that direction was established either by individual Learning Assistance teachers or by the School-Based Team.
- The variation in program direction from school to school, from elementary to secondary and from school district to school district appears to be creating some concern about consistency and continuity to service delivery.
- Few participants indicated a reliance on the Ministry Guidelines for Learning Assistance in determining program direction.
- Participants indicated that management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services are generally made at the individual school level. Responses also indicated that while some monitoring occurs in relation to decision-making there is the absence of a clear accountability framework for decisions made regarding Learning Assistance.

The Nature of Learning Assistance Services

- Although 80 % of survey respondents indicated that Learning Assistance Services were differentiated from other school-based services provided to 'designated' special education students, a review of survey comments as well as comments provided during the meetings/visits and interviews, indicates that while the program may be called "Learning Assistance" and the teacher called the "Learning Assistance Teacher", the nature of the program, primarily at the elementary school level, is quite a departure from Learning Assistance as described by the Ministry.

  For example, many Learning Assistance teachers described their role as providing services to a wide range of special needs students, including 'designated low incidence and high incidence' students, gifted students, severe behaviour students and students for whom English is an additional language.

  Caseload information supplied confirms that many of these 'other students' are being served through the Learning Assistance Program and the Learning Assistance teacher (26 %). Further, sample schools report that of these 'designated' students, 20. 63 % are receiving Learning Assistance as their sole special education service.

- A significant number of participants indicate that the L. A. Program is part of a "seamless - resource" model or the program is in the process of becoming part of the "seamless - resource" model.

- Throughout the review participants indicated that due to resource pressures (funding and Learning Assistance teacher allocation reductions) the Learning Assistance Program is having to serve the more difficult learning problems (low incidence; severe behaviour; severe learning disabled) and as a result, Learning Assistance students (mild-moderate) are being displaced and in some cases the Learning Assistance Program is disappearing altogether.

- FTE and caseload information indicate that Learning Assistance teachers often have 'combined assignments' (L.A. plus other special needs areas) delivering all of the special programs in a particular school. Others indicated that assignments are often part-time (less than 1. 0 FTE) and in many cases involves providing service to more than one school in order to make up a full assignment.

- The Learning Assistance Program tends to be quite different in secondary schools than in elementary schools . . . . far more differentiated . . . far more oriented to 'pull-out' and Learning Assistance Centre programs and far less involved with in-class support and working with teachers and students in classrooms.

The Learning Assistance Program

- There is significant variation in how resources for Learning Assistance are allocated to schools and the most common method appears to be general school budget allocations. In only a few cases did participants indicate a method used that was based on specific or unique school population needs rather than a general student enrolment formula. Many of the sample schools expressed a need for an allocation tied to service need in order to achieve greater equity and access.

- Larger schools (especially secondary schools) tend to receive Learning Assistance staff allocations that are well below those of other schools when staffing is allocated on the basis of a general student population formula.

- Many participants indicated that educational technology for Learning Assistance does not appear to have been a priority and as a result, technology is inadequate and in many cases, non-existent (hardware; software).

- Overwhelmingly throughout the review, participants indicated that resources for Learning Assistance were extremely inadequate given the needs of students and classroom teachers. They expressed the view that it was becoming impossible to meet parent expectations and also impossible to deliver the "seamless-resource" model or the provision of in-class support and consultation as opposed to 'pullout' or separate direct instruction services.

  Repeatedly, participants cited the most significant problem as the lack of time available (both L.A. teacher and classroom teachers) to meet student needs and to deliver quality service . . . or to properly implement a model which would allow many more classroom teachers to deal with Learning Assistance within their classrooms.

- Survey results indicate high caseload responsibilities for Learning Assistance teachers, especially in the many cases where sample schools report less than full-time L.A. teacher assignments (48 out of 115).

- Average current and year-to-date caseloads as a percentage of school population tend to be higher in elementary schools than in secondary schools regardless of district size indicating that the time pressure is somewhat greater in elementary schools.

- Average current caseload as a percentage of school population is higher in small school districts and higher in small elementary schools and small secondary schools.

- In terms of Learning Assistance Teacher Ratios, the sample clearly shows that as district size increases, so does the Learning Assistance Teacher Ratio.

Learning Assistance - Services To Students

- Overwhelmingly participants indicated that the nature of special needs students has changed dramatically in terms of both sheer numbers and the severity and complexity of their learning difficulties . . . and that this is having a profound affect on the ability of schools to deliver Learning Assistance Services.
- Approximately one third (1/3) of participants point out that the "Guidelines for Learning Assistance" are out-of-date and do not reflect the reality of what is happening in schools . . . including the formula for funding learning assistance which they do not believe accurately reflects the real 'incidence numbers'.
- A significant majority of participants indicated that there is no recognition in the program guidelines or funding formula, of students who are assessed as 'borderline' or 'grey area' kids that don't fit the tightened up definition of mild-moderate learning difficulties (L.A. students). Participants indicate this is significantly increasing caseloads and waiting lists and in many cases is also displacing students for whom L.A. was originally intended.
- As pointed out earlier, sample schools indicate that not only are Learning Assistance teachers trying to deal with the above, they are also dealing with 'designated funding category students' . . . (26 % of current caseload).
- Beyond caseload volume and complexity issues there arises implications related to training and qualifications of Learning Assistance teachers as they are expected to deal with a wide variety of special needs/special education categories.

Learning Assistance - Planning and Documentation

- The review highlights serious implications related to what participants perceive to be excessive paperwork demands and requirements as well as an overly bureaucratic approach to the provision of Learning Assistance Services. The recurrent theme is "too many students, too many meetings, too much paperwork . . . and not enough time to provide service to students".

- In the absence of technology/systems and even in some cases, secretarial-clerical support, a majority of participants (see report supplements) indicate that they are 'buried in paper'. Record-keeping demands are onerous and the only significant variation in record- keeping practices seems to be that paperwork has increased.

- There are serious implications related to the ability to arrange and hold meetings with parents and other teachers to conduct planning and consultation and reporting activities.

  Many participants (including parents) related the difficulty of involving parents, given incompatible schedules and nonavailability. This appears to be having a significant impact on communications, reporting and ensuring a full 'understanding' of the programs and services being provided to students.

  Many participants pointed out the difficulty of trying to meet with classroom teachers who are extremely busy before, during and after school attempting to cope with the day-to-day demands of their classrooms . . . yet planning, consultation and collaboration are supposed to be critical features of the service delivery model!

- There are critical implications related to the IEP requirement for students receiving Learning Assistance Services. A significant majority of participants view the requirement as either being unnecessary or impossible to implement as prescribed given caseloads, workloads, staff levels, time available and logistics related to meeting involvement, availability of personnel, willingness of participants to engage in what is viewed as "a paper exercise which takes us away from students" or a "process that is document-driven rather than student and teacher-driven so as to satisfy someone's concern about accountability".

Learning Assistance - Efficacy

- There is significant variation in how sample schools go about finding out whether or not the programs/services provided make a difference or achieve the "expected outcomes".

- From the sample, it appears there is a significant amount of information available related to the efficacy of programs but there is also an apparent need to organize this information, standardize some reporting of key indicators and to communicate results in perhaps more formal ways.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
CONCLUSION

This comprehensive review of Learning Assistance Services has yielded a significant volume of information. To our knowledge it is the most definitive review ever conducted since the introduction of the Learning Assistance Program by the province almost twenty-five years ago.

It is hoped that the review will assist the Ministry, the other major education partners, school districts and schools in the ongoing review of provincial special education policy and guidelines and in discussing and addressing current and emerging issues in the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.

Significant issues and implications have emerged as a result of this review and it is hoped that these difficult and challenging issues will be resolved in the years ahead.

Tremendous insights and positive ideas about "best practices" have also emerged and here it is hoped that such information can help to build ongoing support for "best practice" strategies in all schools of the province.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)

Appendices

1. Sample Letters To School Districts
2. Rationale For Learning Assistance Review
3. School Survey For Learning Assistance Review
4. Meeting / Interview Questions
5. Student Enrolment / Regions
6. Ministry Learning Assistance Guidelines

Report Supplement 1

1. School Visits - Comments Summary
2. Teacher Meetings - Comments Summary
3. District Interviews - Comments Summary
4. Parent Meetings - Comments Summary

Report Supplement 2

1. Service Differentiation (Survey Question 2)
2. Other Support Services (Survey Question 12)
3. Communicating Progress (Survey Question 19)
4. Variation - Record Keeping Practices (Survey Question 22)
5. IEP Requirement (Survey Question 23)
6. Suggested Criteria - IEP's (Survey Question 24)
7. Positive Changes to LA (Survey Question 27)
8. Emerging Challenges (Survey Question 28)
9. Improving Learning Assistance (Survey Question 29)

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Appendix 1: SAMPLE LETTER TO DISTRICTS

May 17, 1997

Superintendent of Schools
Fax :
School District XX

Dear SUPERINTENDENT:

The Honourable Paul Ramsey, Minister of Education, Skills and Training, recently announced that a review of Learning Assistance Services would be conducted in this current school year. The purpose of the review is to determine and describe the current role of Learning Assistance in the delivery of special education support services to students in British Columbia's schools. The study is also expected to examine the impact of IEP requirements on students' educational programs, parent participation and teachers' workloads.

The Special Programs Branch of the Ministry has been working with a Steering Committee of key partner groups to define the review process including the formulation of key research questions and critical data and information requirements to guide the review.

Desharnais and Associates have been contracted to undertake the review on behalf of the Ministry and we are seeking your cooperation and assistance in this regard.

Specifically, we would request that the enclosed surveys be distributed to the schools on the attached list for completion by the Principal and the Learning Assistance Teacher (s) and that completed surveys be returned to the Special Programs Branch of the Ministry **before June 20, 1997.**

If you require further clarification please do not hesitate to call me . Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Wayne Desharnais

cc : Board Chairperson
cc : Claudia Roch - Manager - Special Programs Branch

May 17, 1997

Superintendent of Schools
School District XX
FAX :

Dear Superintendent:

The Honourable Paul Ramsey, Minister of Education, Skills and Training, recently announced that a review of Learning Assistance Services would be conducted in this current school year. The purpose of the review is to determine and describe the current role of Learning Assistance in the delivery of special education support services to students in British Columbia's schools. The study is also expected to examine the impact of IEP requirements on students' educational programs, parent participation and teachers' workloads.

The Special Programs Branch of the Ministry has been working with a Steering Committee of key partner groups to define the review process including the formulation of key research questions and critical data and information requirements to guide the review.

Desharnais and Associates have been contracted to undertake the review on behalf of the Ministry and we are seeking your cooperation and assistance in this regard.

Specifically, we would request that the enclosed surveys be distributed to the schools on the attached list for completion by the Principal and the Learning Assistance Teacher (s) and that completed surveys be returned to the Special Programs Branch of the Ministry before June 20, 1997.

In addition, we would request that your district participate in the field-work component of the review. To this end we would ask you to arrange for the Consultant **(Mr. Wayne Desharnais)** to meet with the Principal and LA Teacher (s) in the following schools on the following dates.

The purpose of the meetings will be to have the Consultant discuss the nature of Learning Assistance Services provided, to give the Principal and LA teacher (s) the opportunity to express their thoughts on the strengths and the challenges associated with the delivery of Learning Assistance Services and for the Consultant to talk to some students as appropriate.

School	Date	Time
Elementary	May 26	8 : 30 - 10 : 00 am
Junior Secondary	May 26	10 : 30 - 12:00 noon
Secondary	May 26	1 : 00 - 2 : 30 pm

While the Consultant is in the school district, it would be appreciated if a meeting could occur with you, and/or if applicable, the district staff person responsible for the administration of special programs:

Location	Date	Time
School Board Office	May 26	2 : 45 - 3 : 45 pm

Finally, we would request that an invitational meeting be announced to provide all interested LA teachers and regular classroom teachers the opportunty to provide input as described above :

Location	Date	Time
Determined by District	May 26	4 : 00 - 5 : 00 pm

and an invitational meeting of interested parents of students receiving Learning Assistance Services to provide them with the opportunity for expressing their views related to the service.

Location	Date	Time
Determined by District	May 26	7 : 00 - 8 : 30 pm

I will be telephoning you shortly to discuss all of the above and to hopefully finalize arrangements given this very busy time of the school year. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Wayne Desharnais

cc : Board Chairperson
cc: Claudia Roch - Manager - Special Programs Branch

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

Appendix 1: Rationale for Learning Assistance Review

Why is the data being collected ?

- The Minister of Education, Skills and Training announced that a review of Learning Assistance Services would be conducted in this school year.
- The review is intended to determine and describe the current role of Learning Assistance in the delivery of special education support services.
- The review is also expected to examine the impact of IEP requirements on students' educational programs, parent participation and teachers' workloads.
- Information must be collected in order to provide answers to such key questions as :

    1. In the sampled schools, what are current school district policies regarding the delivery of Learning Assistance services ?
    2. Which students receive Learning Assistance Services ?
    3. What is the nature of the Learning Assistance Services currently provided in schools ?
    4. How are Learning Assistance Services documented and how is information about student progress conveyed ?
    5. What is known about the efficacy of Learning Assistance Services ?

Why is this Data Collection Process Important ?

- The information derived from the survey will be central in informing the overall Learning Assistance Services Review.
- The sample data collected will greatly assist the educational partners in discussing and addressing current and emerging issues about the nature of Learning Assistance Services.
- It will provide key information which will allow the Ministry and districts to inform discussions and decisions related to the formulation of policy and special program guidelines.
- It will provide a vehicle for school districts to better understand and refine the nature of district practices related to the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.
- There is a need for a more recent " snapshot " of Learning Assistance Services since this has not been undertaken for a period of several years.
- Since there is little or no research available on this type of service which appears to be unique in North America, such a review will yield valuable information to the larger special education community.
- The review will assist the Ministry-Special Programs Branch in the on-going review of provincial special education policy and guidelines and will help districts through the provision of information on " best practices " in the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

Appendix 3: School Surveys For LA Review

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SKILLS AND TRAINING
SPECIAL PROGRAMS BRANCH

SCHOOL SURVEY : LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

A. GENERAL FRAMEWORK - LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

***** please (✔) those that apply**

1. The purpose and the description of Learning Assistance Services is :

- ❑ specifically / discretely set out at the *district* level
- ❑ specifically / discretely set out at the *school* level
- ❑ generally set out in an overall description of the array of support services provided to students with special needs (district level)
- ❑ generally set out in an overall description of the array of support services provided to students with special needs (school level)

2. Are Learning Assistance Services differentiated from other school- based services provided to designated special education students ?

❑ Yes ❑ No

Comment (s) :

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please (✔) those that apply :

3. Are management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services generally made :

- ❑ centrally by the Board / District Staff
- ❑ at the individual school level
- ❑ both centrally (district) and at the school level

B. THE LEARNING ASSISTANCE RESOURCE

***** For the following questions please (✔) those that apply**

4. Resources for LA are allocated to schools :

- ❑ as a part of a general budget allocation
- ❑ as a separate budget allocation
- ❑ using a general school staffing allocation formula
- ❑ using a separate staffing allocation formula for LA

5. The caseload for each LA teacher is established according to :

- ❑ a screening and assessment process
- ❑ classroom teacher referrals
- ❑ parent referrals student-initiated referrals
- ❑ school counsellor referrals
- ❑ school-based team recommendations/decisions
- ❑ school administration decisions priorities set by the LA teacher
- ❑ the nature of the service (ie. consultative/direct instruction, etc.)
- ❑ the level of LA teacher time allocated to the school
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

6. The average caseload of LA teacher(s) in the school is :

	Current/Active	**Year-to-date**
individual students		

7. Indicate the percentage of time spent on each of the following by LA teachers in the school :

Activity	**% Time**	**Aver.Hrs/Wk**
Consultation with other teachers		
Planning instructional activities to be delivered by other teachers or teaching assistants		
IEP development/ management		
School-Based team meetings		
Assessment of students		
Working with parents		
Working with other agencies		
Direct instruction to students ***		

*** Within the Direct Instruction Category what percentage of time is spent on:

	% Time	Aver. Hrs/Week
in - class students		
pull - out students		
support blocks		

8. What proportion of students who have received/are receiving LA Services (from Year-To-Date Caseload) :

- are being seen/have been seen primarily for assessment and consultation? _____%
- are receiving/have received services that primarily involve collaborative planning ? _____%
- are being seen/have been seen for ongoing instruction by LA teacher ? _____%
- are accessing all of the above services _____%

C. LEARNING ASSISTANCE - SERVICES TO STUDENTS 9. Who are the students receiving LA support ?

	Current Caseload	Yr To Date	Typical Length of Program (HRS / YR)	IEP Yes/no
Mild to Moderate LD				
Slow Learners				
Low Average Ability				
Desig. Sev. Behaviour				
Desig. Fund. Cat. (Low Inc.)				
Desig. Fund Cat. (High Inc.)				

10. Of the students receiving LA support services how many are :

Students for whom English is an additional language _____

Students from First Nations _____

11. What number of students in designated funding categories (see question # 9) are receiving LA support as their sole supplemental service ?

☐ **Students**

12. What other support services are in place for those designated funding category students who are receiving LA support as well as other special services ? ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Please provide the grade level distribution of students who have received/ are receiving LA Services (from Year-to-date Caseload) :

Grade	Number of Students	Grade	Number of Students

14. Please indicate which of the following *instructional* support services are provided through the school's LA program :

- ❑ Consultation with other teachers
- ❑ Developing modified curriculum
- ❑ Providing remedial instruction using adapted curriculum materials
- ❑ Providing remedial instruction using alternate materials (eg., SRA kits)
- ❑ Specific skills instruction for increased independence (keyboarding skills, using a tape recorder to take oral tests, etc.)
- ❑ Strategies instruction to be used in the classroom (advanced organizers, COPS, etc.)
- ❑ Pre-teaching concepts and /or vocabulary to be introduced in the classroom at a later date, etc.
- ❑ Assisting with the completion of classroom assignments
- ❑ Other (please specify)_____

15. To what extent are the following assessment strategies used to determine individual student *service need* :

	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Psychological Assessments			
Informal (Tchr designed assessments/observation instruments)			
Group Standardized (Curr- criterion referenced)			
Individual standardized achievement instruments			

16. To what extent are the following assessment strategies used to determine individual student *progress* :

	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Psychological Assessments			
Informal (Tchr designed assessments/observation instruments)			
Group Standardized (Curr- criterion referenced)			
Individual standardized achievement instruments			

D. LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES - PLANNING AND DOCUMENTATION

17. How are parents initially informed and/or consulted about the LA support planned for their children ?

- ❑ IEP Meeting
- ❑ Letter Home
- ❑ Parent- Class Teacher Conference
- ❑ Parent - LA Teacher Conference
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

18. Who is involved in planning the instructional support that students receive through the LA program ?

Please (✔) those that apply :

- ❑ LA Teacher
- ❑ Teachers Assistant
- ❑ Classroom Teacher
- ❑ District-based specialist
- ❑ School Administrator
- ❑ Parent
- ❑ School-based Team
- ❑ Student
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

19. How is ongoing student progress in Learning Assistance communicated ?

To Students : _____

To Parents : _____

To Teacher(s) : _____

To School Administration : _____

20. How does the LA teacher (s) document (keep record) of the LA support services provided to students ?

- ❑ Daily Log
- ❑ Checklists
- ❑ Personal Notes
- ❑ Special Reports/Letters
- ❑ IEP's
- ❑ Daybook
- ❑ Working Files
- ❑ Other (Please specify) _____

21. How is *student participation and progress i* n the LA program documented and reported ?

- ❑ Report Card Comments
- ❑ Special Report Card
- ❑ Special Reports/Letters
- ❑ IEP's
- ❑ Checklists
- ❑ Graphs
- ❑ Anecdotal Reports
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

22. Do record keeping practices vary according to the type and/or intensity of student participation in the LA program ?

❑ Yes ❑ No

If yes , how do they vary ?

_____

_____

23. What affect is the requirement of IEP's for students receiving 25 or more hours of LA services having :

- ❑ on the workload of LA teachers in the school
- ❑ on the ability to manage student needs/caseload needs
- ❑ on the involvement of parents
- ❑ on the provision of service to students
- ❑ on record - keeping practices

24. What criteria would the school suggest to govern whether or not an LA student should have an IEP ?

E. LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICES - FINDING OUT ABOUT RESULTS

25. How has the effectiveness of Learning Assistance been monitored over the last three years ?

- ❑ IEP Reviews
- ❑ School Team Review Meetings
- ❑ Follow-up Assessments
- ❑ Program Evaluation (internal)
- ❑ Program Evaluation (external)
- ❑ School Accreditation Results
- ❑ Teacher Questionnaires
- ❑ Parent Questionnaires
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

26. What indicators of success are used to monitor the effectiveness of the LA program ?

- ❑ Student Achievement Results
- ❑ Student Satisfaction
- ❑ Keeping Students in School
- ❑ Teacher Satisfaction/Surveys
- ❑ Student IEP Goals met
- ❑ Parent Satisfaction/Surveys
- ❑ Student Exit Criteria
- ❑ Extent of Student Self-Referral
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

F. LEARNING ASSISTANCE - CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

27. What positive changes have occurred in relation to the LA program over the last several years ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. What challenges have emerged ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

29. Within existing resources, how could the way Learning Assistance services are delivered be enhanced or improved ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank You For Your Assistance And Cooperation !

Please submit completed survey to :

Desharnais & Associates
Site 82A, Comp 2, RR #1
Okanagan Falls, B.C.
V0H 1R0

Fax : 250 - 497 - 8843
Phone : 250 - 497 - 8843

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Appendix 4: Meeting / Interview Questions

School Visits - Interview Format

SERVICE DELIVERY

1. Are Learning Assistance Services differentiated from other School-based services provided to designated special education students, or are special education services "seamless" at the school level ?
2. What are some of the positive features of Learning Assistance Services delivered in your school ?
3. What are some of the challenges associated with the provision of effective Learning Assistance Services in your school ?
4. What affect is the requirement of IEP's for students receiving 25 or more hours of service having on :

    - the workload of LA teachers
    - the ability of LA teachers to manage student needs/caseload demands
    - the involvement of parents
    - the provision of service to students

5. What can you suggest that would significantly improve the delivery of Learning Assistance Services to students in schools ? (Within existing resources).

Meeting Format (Teachers)

A. PROGRAM DIRECTION

1. How is program direction for Learning Assistance determined and set out in the district ?
2. How is the program defined / determined at the school level ?

B. SERVICE DELIVERY

3. Are Learning Assistance Services differentiated from other School-based services provided to designated special education students, or are special education services "seamless" at the school level ?
4. What are some of the positive features of Learning Assistance Services delivered in schools ?
5. What are some of the challenges associated with the provision of effective Learning Assistance Services in schools ?
6. What can you suggest that would significantly improve the delivery of Learning Assistance Services to students in schools ?(Within existing resources)

C. PROGRAM RESULTS

7. What are Learning Assistance teachers providing to students and classroom teachers that "works " (ie. positively affects student learning outcomes) ?
8. What evidence exists to support this perception ?

Meeting Format (Parents)

A. INFORMATION AND ACCESS

1. How do parents find out about Learning Assistance Services for students in schools ?
2. Do you as parents feel you have a good idea as to what the Learning Assistance Program is intended to accomplish for your child ?
3. From your perspective has it been relatively easy to access this service for your child ?

B. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

4. Are you provided the opportunity to participate in the planning of LA Services for your child ? If so, what is the nature of your involvement ?
5. Does your child have an IEP ? Do you have a copy ? Are you involved in setting out the IEP and monitoring the IEP ?
6. Are you consulted throughout your child's participation in the program ?
7. How are you informed about your child's progress in the program ?
8. Are you satisfied with the current progress reporting methods used by the school in relation to Learning Assistance Services ?

C. PROGRAM RESULTS - SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

9. From your perspective is the LA program successfully helping your child to progress ? How do you know this ?
10. Are you asked to participate in the evaluation of the LA program ? If so, how do you participate ?
11. Can you offer any suggestions aimed at enhancing or improving the provision of Learning Assistance Services in schools ? (Within existing resources).

INTERVIEW FORMAT (District Office)

A. FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING ASSISTANCE

1. Does the school district have a specific policy related to the Learning Assistance Program and the delivery of Learning Assistance Services ?

❑ Yes ❑ No

_____

_____

2. If there is no specific policy, how does the district provide direction to schools regarding the provision of Learning Assistance Services ?

_____

_____

3. Are Learning Assistance Services distinct from other school-based special education services ? If so, how are they distinct ?

4. How does the district allocate resources to schools for Learning Assistance ?

5. Are management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services generally made at the district level or the school level ?

6. If decisions are made at the school level how are these decisions made and how does the district ensure accountability related to these decisions ?

7. Does the district set out special qualification requirements for the assignment of LA teachers ? If so, what are these ?

B. PROGRAM EFFICACY

8. Are schools in the district following the IEP requirements set out by the Ministry ?

❑ Yes ❑ No

9. How does the district monitor IEP requirements ?

10. How does the district monitor the overall effectiveness of the Learning Assistance Program ?

11. What evidence exists in the school / district that illustrates / confirms student progress, parent satisfaction, or other measures of efficacy ?

C. CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

12. What positive changes have occurred in relation to the LA program over the last several years ?

13. What challenges have emerged ?

14. How might Learning Assistance Services be improved, given available resources ?

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

Appendix 5: STUDENT ENROLMENT BY REGION

REGION	DISTRICT	STUDENT ENROLMENT
Kootenays	Southeast Kootenay	7676
	Rocky Mountain	4692
	Kootenay Lake	6790
	Arrow Lakes	939
	Kootenay-Columbia	5990
	Boundary	2354
	TOTAL	23 041 = 4 . 5 %
Lower Mainland/Coast	Langley	19555
	Surrey	53915
	North Vancouver	17990
	West Vancouver	6586
	Sunshine Coast	4512
	Powell River	3527
	Howe Sound	4506
	Delta	17870
	Richmond	24123
	Vancouver	56764
	New Westminster	4699
	Burnaby	23612
	Coquitlam	31107
	Chilliwack	10961
	Abbotsford	18143
	Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows	13966
	Mission	7130
	Fraser-Cascade	2539
	TOTAL	242 313 = 46 . 9 %
Vancouver Island	Greater Victoria	23047
	Sooke	9304
	Saanich	8830
	Gulf Islands	1765
	Campbell River	7785
	Vanc Island West	873
	Vanc Island North	2792
	Alberni	6164
	Cowichan Valley	10574
	Nanaimo-Ladysmith	17279

	Qualicum	5362
	Comox Valley	10475
	TOTAL	104 250 = 20 . 2 %
Okanagan / Cariboo	**Revelstoke**	1811
	Vernon	10376
	Central Okanagan	22148
	Cariboo-Chilcotin	9527
	Okanagan-Similkameen	3219
	Nicola-Similkameen	2273
	Okanagan Skaha	8136
	Kamloops/Thompson	18151
	Gold Trail	2490
	North Okanagan-Shuswap	6754
	TOTAL	84 883 = 16 . 5 %
North	**Prince Rupert**	4023
	Bulkley Valley	3153
	Coast Mountains	8097
	Stikine	389
	Nisga'a	592
	Quesnel	5480
	Prince George	19798
	Nechako Lakes	5563
	Peace River South	5988
	Peace River North	5758
	Fort Nelson	1288
	Central Coast	416
	Haida Gwai/Q. Charlotte	934
	TOTAL	61 479 = 11 . 9 %

Source : Ministry of Education, Skills and Training / Special Programs Branch

Review of Learning Assistance Services Report (1997)

Appendix 6: Learning Assistance Guidelines

Purpose

Learning assistance services are school-based, non-categorical resource services designed to support classroom teachers and their students who have mild to moderate difficulties in learning and adjustment.

Description of Services

Learning assistance provides a co-ordinated and integrated set of support services which include school-based consultation, collaborative planning and co-ordination with the school-based team, and instruction. It also includes assessment and evaluation to Level B (see Section H7: Appendix B).

Learning Assistance Teachers typically help to organize, maintain, and integrate services in the school and, as part of a school-based team, provide the major link with support services available at the district level. Students who have severe disabilities usually require access to more specialized programs and services described in Section E of this manual.

Some schools combine learning assistance with other special education services to create a 'Resource Teacher' model. Where this model is used, it means that one resource teacher works with a number of classroom teachers to provide support for all students in their classroom: those who are in the high and low incidence groups; those who have mild learning difficulties; those who may need enrichment; and in some cases, those who are learning English as a second language. There are no territorial lines drawn in service delivery. The ministry considers this appropriate provided the supports available to the students served are consistent with guidelines and appropriate to the needs of the students.

Collaborative Planning and Co-ordination

The learning assistance teacher plays an active role in the identification, assessment, planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation process described in Section C. He/she is a member of the school-based team, provides collaborative consultation, assists with pre-referral interventions and works closely with teachers and the school-based team to plan for, organize and access support services for students with special needs.

Instruction

Instructional services include:

- teaching students to develop learning strategies for use in classroom settings or for independent learning;
- skill development or remediation; and
- development of compensatory skills to minimize the effect of a disabling condition on learning.

Students receiving ongoing instruction in a learning assistance program should have an Individual Education Plan.

The setting in which the direct instruction provided by learning assistance teachers

takes place (the classroom, the learning assistance centre, or some combination of both) should be determined in collaboration with the classroom teacher based on student needs and the instructional goals to be achieved.

Consultation

Consultative services include:

- collaboration with classroom teachers to design or implement instructional strategies or to adapt instructional content or materials;
- advising teachers concerning adjustments to curriculum, instruction, or environmental factors in the classroom which may facilitate learning for a student or group of students;
- consulting with parents and students regarding learning strategies and organizational skills; and
- consulting with district and community resource personnel.

Assessment

The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to plan and implement an educational program to help the student learn. The assessment support may include:

- criterion-referenced or norm-referenced assessment to Level B (see Section H7: Appendix B) as required to answer specific instructional questions;
- systematic observation and collection of behavioural data to establish baseline/progress data, or describe functional behaviours;
- synthesis of information from parents, student records, other service providers, and health-related information to aid the assessment process; and
- in-depth interviews with students to determine their knowledge of the learning process and/or thinking strategies.

Access to Learning Assistance Services

Each school should establish procedures for teachers, students and parents to access learning assistance services consistent with the overall purpose stated above. Schools should also decide the focus for learning assistance services, considering the nature of the needs and range of other school-based supports.

Personnel

Teachers providing learning assistance services should possess:

- strong interpersonal, communication and collaborative skills;
- expertise in a wide range of teaching and management strategies;
- knowledge of methods for evaluating and selecting instructional materials suitable for students with a variety of special needs;
- ability to carry out a variety of assessments, including classroom observation, administration and interpretation of norm-referenced assessment instruments to Level B (see Section H7: Appendix B), curriculum-based assessment and diagnostic teaching methods; and
- ability to contribute to the development, implementation, and evaluation of an IEP in consultation with classroom teacher(s), parents, students and district and community resource personnel.

Learning assistance teachers should meet, at minimum, the following qualifications:

- A Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent.
- A minimum of two years of successful classroom teaching experience.
- University-level courses in the following areas:
    - Introductory survey course in teaching students with special needs;
    - Assessment/testing theory and practice;
    - Strategies for teaching, modifying and adapting the curriculum to meet the diverse individual needs of students; and
    - Collaborative consultation.

In addition, university courses in the following areas are recommended:

- meeting the needs of students with specific exceptionalities (e.g. learning disabilities, AD/HD, FAS/FAE, gifted);
- computer technology for the classroom; and
- meeting the diverse behavioural and emotional needs of students.

Teacher assistants often work in learning assistance programs. Teacher assistants should have sufficient skills and training for the duties they are assigned, including:

- characteristics of exceptional students; and
- strategies for working with students with learning and behaviour difficulties.

Inservice training should include opportunities to develop further expertise in these and related areas.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (July 1997)
Report Supplement 1: Comments Summary

School Visits

Summary of Responses

SERVICE DELIVERY

Are Learning Assistance Services differentiated from other school-based services provided to 'designated' special education students or are special education services "seamless" at the school level ?

The LAT is 100 % in this school of 360 - works with groups of students - it's a resource model - LAT also arranges and chairs School - Based Team Meetings. Other services at school include 0.2 Counsellor, 4.0 TA's (5 1/2 hours). LAT has direct role in working with TA's. LAT writes IEP's for students in low incidence categories. LAT supports kids with L.D. as well as behavior students.

The program is not differentiated ... it is " seamless " but we have Teacher Assistants for " low incidence " students.

Our program is differentiated ... we have an LA program and also separate services for " low incidence " students and for gifted students. We also have two alternate programs (secondary).

Our program is differentiated but we are in the process of discussing a move to a " resource model ".

Yes ... our program is just for " LA students ".

Our program is " seamless " in that one teacher has an assignment that covers LA, Intensive Support and ESL.

We run a " seamless model "....providing support to 113 children ... 37 of whom have " Ministry Numbers " (designated).

The program (secondary) combines the service of two LA teachers as well as a number of subject teachers ... there are programs for mild - moderate learning difficulty students, two classes of work-study/work experience, a special program for gifted students and we also have two " Pathfinder Labs ".

The program is " seamless " ... with one LA teacher plus some support workers (TA's)...we also provide back-up for behaviour intervention, working with the District Counsellor ... we have very little time for "designated students ".

Our program is a Resource Model/ Resource Teacher Model.. last year we ran a categorical model...now we deal with LA kids and Designated kids ... but the designated students get first priority.

We run a " seamless model "... the school determines the model and method of service delivery...we run a combination of "pull-out " and work in classrooms ... we deal with individual students as well as groups of students... the teachers decide how they want service delivered.

The program is an " integrated " one ... we deal with LA, Severe Behaviour, SLD, Gifted and French LA ... we deal with very few short-term LA students...primarily the program is " pull-out " but we do go into classes if the teacher requests this.

The program is " mixed " (LA and SLD)... pull-out but also go into classes to conduct " writers workshop " program.

Organized as a pull-out program. Teachers refer for LA. At the beginning of the year students are prioritized. This serves the lowest students. They are usually at least 2 years below grade level. As the school is in a transient area, only the neediest students receive service. Service is to slow learners mostly, but also some L.D. students. Daily caseload today is 31 for the 0.8 FTE. Over the course of the year the caseload would be about 40. Most students would be in LA for the year. There is one low incidence student - there is no involvement with LA. Actual program is determined in consultation with the teacher. Parents are invited to participate, but usually do not. All students have IEP's except one who will not be seen more than 15 hours. Transient issues are predominant in the school.

1200 Students, grades 10 - 12 (2 feeder schools). LA allotment is 1.2 (LA teacher is 0.8). Special Needs L.I. - .25. We run SOI - one block, Tutorial - Math block, Math 10A within LA. Remedial English pullout - 1 block. Use "Success Maker' in the L.A. Room. LA provides services to all students - high and low incidence. In the course of a year 100 students receive some support through the L.A. program. Kids who have IEP's are well aware of this - parents are aware too. They sign the IEP's.

Not really - there are two people who provide services - but services are differentiated. In school of 400.... 0.8 is LA and 1.0 as Sp. Ed. LA is seen as serving students in the mild to moderate categories. In practice the service is seamless in the school.

School has collapsed the barriers so that one teacher works with primary and one is working with intermediate. This way the classroom teacher works with one support teacher. Students are referred through the SBT. In the fall the SBT meets with every teacher to review students in the class... have regular "inclusion meetings" 4 times a week - a 1/2 hour meeting with each teacher once a month. This reduces referrals to the SBT and is preventative. Classroom teachers support these kinds of meetings. Role of support teacher is to work with the classroom teacher in the way that supports them - try to accommodate the teaching style of the teacher - so there is a wide variety from pull - out to in- class to T. A. support.... Also try to meet the student's style too - some kids need pull-out, others can be supported in class. Total complement of staff (0.1 Gifted, 0.8 LA, 0.9 Res. Room, 0.8 severe behavior. Also 67 hours of SEA time (Special Education Assistant).

Have a Life Skills program for low incidence students. Have a resource room for high incidence - moderate behavior and SLD students. Three teachers do LA within 1.0 FTE. All blocks have an LA block - kids are placed in an LA block - through SBT meetings. Students are reviewed and placed in an LA block coming into the school. The maximum number in a block is 12. Math and English are the main focus. Assistance is given in the core areas with assignments. Group help is given with regular curriculum assignments..... 90% of students are grades 8,9, or 10.... I Have one block for assessment - communicate with teachers monthly on who is receiving LA. A list is circulated. There is no formal notification to parents about the student receiving LA. Reporting to parents is done by use of a report card insert - tells what student is doing well and not doing well - it's a checklist. LA program serves about 120 kids in a year.

It's an integral part of the special services. Team approach. LA in this school (2.75 FTE) organized to bring services to the classroom - team teaching, do testing, liaison with parents. LA teachers are part of SBT... have an effective articulation with feeder schools. Have a peer tutoring program - 100 a year are peer tutors (25 per quarter). Lunch time is time for student to work in the LA Centre. There are a group of 22 kids who have modified programs. They are not "special needs ". There is no pull out program in a traditional sense - work is done in-class, but there may be some pull out on specific tasks. Have spent a lot of inservice time with staff on regular, adapted and modified programs.

LA is distinct in this school - client list is separate. Have 0.5 LA. and 1.0 Resource in the school. Resource students require more 1:1 assistance. LA is more of a remedial program. Resource students are designated SLD students. Students are referred for LA by parent, teacher or administrator - permission form is sent home prior to LA teacher seeing the student. Child receives LA assessment, we meet with the parents and teacher...have a caseload of 38 today, over a year about 60 students. In addition to direct service, part of LA role is consultation to teachers, assessment services to give information to classroom teachers and parents. Utilize a study skills approach with intermediate students (in-class). See role as preventative, instructional and collaborative.

LA teacher (0.7) is seen as a resource in the school.... coordinates text book orders, chairs Pro D Committee, Chairs the SBT. The LA teacher is an integral part of the placement decision making. The position demands flexibility and solid working relationships with teachers, parents and the principal. The tighter this relationship is, the better for the students. Working with parents is an essential component of the program - there is a parent training program. Early intervention (primary) is a priority - early intervention is directed to literacy and intermediate focuses more on study skills - frequently in-class. Articulation with the high school is an important part of the LA role. Everyone in the school is part of a team - LA and Resource teacher work as a team. The development of the resource program in the school is the result of work done by the LA teacher. Students were identified through the LA program. The distinction between LA and Resource is the severity of need of the student. The LA teacher offers a broad school based service as opposed to the Resource Program. Caseload at the present time is 40, and over the year at least 60 students would be seen.

Have 4 Special Education programs that are separate in the school - Pre Employment Program - a part time program teacher. For students making the transition to work - 0.8 FTE. A minimum essentials program - this has 5 levels - 1.8 FTE. Life skills program for mentally handicapped - 1 FTE teacher. Special programs for Severe Behaviour Disorder students - senior alternate program - 1.0 FTE. At this school LA is called tutorial services - 1.8 FTE teachers. One teacher full time with content teachers part time. Students can access service throughout the day. Some students are monitored and served through the classroom teacher... have a range of student contacts per month from 220 to 800. Do some work in class, especially early in the semester. LA teacher coordinates all the Special Education programs. Serves to facilitate program review. Give a lot of service to kids who want to "up their math skills and their editing and writing skills".

School has 0.6 LA; School has a Special Education class for severe intellectual disabilities (that will close this year). LA works in conjunction with counselling and other services (eg. Speech Pathology and OT/PT and School Psychologist). Programs depend on the student and teacher. Programs are both in class and pull-out. Students come out in small groups - not all are identified SLD. Referrals come from teachers or parents. Students sometimes refer themselves. Teachers fill out a form at referral time. Have been focussing on primary lately. Case load is up

to 46 students (17 are SLD).

LA is 0.3 this year (was 0.6 last year) and has 0.4 inclusion time in schools (inclusion = low incidence). Students served include the high incidence students in the school. Meet with teachers in the fall and review students and who needs help. Work informally with the staff as it's a small school. Serve 25 kids at any one time - see about 40 during the year. Have 7 kids on the high incidence list, rest are remedial, with short term and long term.

In primary its mostly pull out and in intermediate it's more in-class. Reports are given at each reporting period.

Students are referred from the teacher, parent, team meetings (held weekly). Teacher fills out referral form giving background and classroom teacher contacts the parents. School based testing and observations. Do both in class and pull-out. Services are integrated so that the classroom teacher has one support person. Case load is currently 57. About 30 would be seen as LA and the remainder would be special needs.

Adopted a resource room model this year. Students come to us for LA. Last year tried working in class and adapted lesson plans and it didn't work very well so have gone to a resource room model. Students can be time tabled in or come on a drop in basis as directed by their teacher. Could be timetabled in as a result of IEP meetings - or through parental request or by Administration. Students are identified as '104' students. With admin placements, it's more of a supervised study, or behavioral concerns. LA teachers serve both '104' and 126. Low incidence served on a supervisory basis through the TA's. SBT meets on Fridays at lunch - it's a problem- solving team. To improve it, we want to involve teachers more. Emphasis of LA is support in content areas.

As LA, monitor low incidence students, do work with kids with L.D., write IEP's for high incidence students. Work with students for 8-10 weeks, one hour daily. Use a pull-out with direct instruction. District Resource Teacher does IEP's with low incidence students. LA does help with directing the TA's.

What are some of the positive features of Learning Assistance Services delivered in your school ?

Resource model is a strength - giving kids intensive service for a short time really works. SBT model is excellent - power of getting everyone together pays off. Transition meeting with secondary works well - have specific meeting with teams from both schools and parents and students. LAT does Coordinating for this.

Students, as a result of this program, get to feel successful.

A strength is the collaboration with classroom teachers.

The Learning Centre approach ... small groups ... " drop-in " program ... student self-referral.

We have a strong assessment component and excellent tracking of students ... we are strong in relation to consultation with classroom teachers and the sharing of materials.

The school can determine the appropriate staff mix ... there are no collective agreement prohibitions.

The School-Based Team meets weekly and the LA Teacher chairs the meetings to review student programs ... another strength is the assignment of " case managers ".

Teamwork and collaboration and the added support of the District Consultants and District Special Counsellors.

Peer Tutoring component ... homework help... work-study component... Peer Mediation component ... and our School - Based Team.

Early intervention (K-3) ... our community school model ... our tracking system for " inclusion " ... our program for release time for teachers to attend school-based team meetings.

The flexible nature of the program ... our district's training and qualifications criteria for the hiring and assignment of LA Teachers.

Our ability to utilize " inner city " special grant funds.

Our " Communication Book " that follows each child.

The team approach ... timetabled together for meetings...very positive response by regular classroom teachers ... the assignment of a portion of the case management load plus dealing with each other's kids.

Our school-wide screening program (whole grades each year)...the number of us sharing the program and our expertise (five of us involved to make-up the 1 . 0 FTE for LA).

Kids can work at their own level and gain confidence. They learn to take risks in a safe atmosphere. Many kids see a lot of growth in LA room. There is no stigma attached to the LA room.

Give a lot of time to the low end students. Classroom teachers are good to work with. Can track students re: their progress. Can tailor LA to each student's needs. Students enjoy learning - especially the primary students. Model is effective given the nature of our students. They benefit from small group.

Support in Math is good - it's not identified as a separate program - it's part of the school. Kids are being retained, notably the low incidence students. Work experience is a positive aspect of kids on IEP's. Supportive staff - good at providing assignments for the kids to work on in LA. Kids feel good about going to school here. Programs are highly integrated. Without the LA program, we'd lose our Special Needs Kids.

The staff and how qualified they are. They are hard working. The school has a supportive staff. We have a good community - good liaison with our parents. There have been many successes. School works well as a team and with the community. There is a counsellor(0.6) who works as part of the team. This makes a huge difference for the SBT.

Key is that the teacher feels supported. Students don't feel stigmatized - working in class, many student receive help. Flexibility is positive - enables teachers to help kids in the best way for them - they can be pulled out or receive service in class. Serve kids on their educational needs rather than the predetermined label. The blended service is a positive thing - it's not a separate service. There is administrative support for the delivery of service in this way. The administrator

trusts the staff. This (trust) is also a key to providing service this way. Teacher support is very positive - teachers can timetable so they have support - teachers give a little in terms of when they timetable math for example so that they can have in-class support. Teachers see the delivery of service as fair. The program has good special education constant support. There is adequate support in terms of space - open area for support teachers.

Marginal students have time and help and are able to achieve (non failing grades). Strategies are taught. Improves self-esteem. Students achieve success and feel better. Students return on their own for assistance. Teachers are caring and professional and have the best interests of the children at heart. Alternate materials are provided to students. A survey 4 years ago given to students was very positive.

All special services focus on the student. Student oriented. The peer tutoring program benefits both students - the tutor and those tutored. There is an after school tutoring club. Teachers accept LA teachers as tutors/teachers in class. Articulation process is functioning well. Have a high powered and well functioning SBT. Have excellent communication within the Special Services Department and within the school.

The LA teacher is well qualified. The collaborative priorities approach with teachers is valued. LA is part of the entire school, not just a Remedial Program. For example, the LA teacher organized the Fun Fair, is involved in the discipline policy, etc.

There is flexibility in the LA program. Teachers don't see LA as just a removal of kids from the classroom program. The LA teacher is there to provide support. Facility for LA is good. Get good feedback from parents.

The fact that it exists and is an integral part of everything that goes on in the school. The early intervention aspect is valued. This program is a hub of everything that happens in the school. This program coordinates so many activities in the school. The LA teacher sees the whole picture, yet knows the little pieces. The collaborative role is very appreciated by teachers (see written comments from teachers). The LA teacher sees the needs in each classroom and supports the needs of teachers for materials and the needs of kids in terms of teacher and student learning style.

Large amount of opportunity for direct service to the student. It's a very personal service. Computers are part of the program - so kids learn better keyboarding and editing skills. LA teacher is part of staff meeting each month - reporting on numbers of students receiving service. It's also a forum for questions from staff. Confidential sheets are used (given to each teacher) - each file is reviewed by LA teacher. Adaptations checklist is given to each teacher. Files are updated 2 times per year. This is all computerized, so teachers have up to date information on all kids having difficulty. Offer inservice in the fall - on confidential sheets, how they work, where stored, etc. and inservice on SBT meetings. SBT meetings are scheduled weekly at a time when all teachers can be available. Services also offered during exam time - help teachers make adaptations to exams or provide scribes etc. and handle adjudication process for provincial exams. Have from 2 to 8 students requesting adjudication per semester. Have been able to provide a safe comfortable work space for all kids. CAPAP teachers administer a Cdn. Achievement test each year - gives a profile on each student, helps LA, teacher guide students.

Noticed an improvement in attitude on the part of students. Sometimes the academic focus is slower to gauge . In-class support is appreciated by teachers. Have good rapport with parents of students in the LA program. They readily come

in for the IEP meetings. Students come out of classrooms readily. Students develop strategies they are able to use in other parts of their lives, eg. SQ3R strategies for reading. The individual attention is helpful for students. Students receive support in social- emotional areas.

Working in class and having pull-out for Reading Recovery and Project Read works well. The gross motor program at primary is good. "Reading Buddies" is a positive feature. The 3-4's act as buddies to the grade 1 and 2's. Reading buddies is timetabled 2 times a week. Flexibility in the system is beneficial. Parents are excellent in terms of support - they are good at volunteering consistently. Much of the work done in LA is preventative in nature - especially the in-class work. Have long IEP forms for "function 3" and a short form for LA kids. This is quite manageable.

Kids who are timetabled in receive a good service. They benefit from the service. Many students are supported right in the classroom. Bulk of LA is alternate courses - Communications 9 and 10, modified Science, Socials, Math. LA has evolved and we're really trying to meet student needs with the staff available. The students love coming to the resource room.

The organization of the LA service in the school. The quick response time. The quality of the team members. The team approach - we look to each other for support. Collegiality with the teachers. There's not a sense of your kids or our kids - there's a sense of working together. We have good Aides - work mostly with kids in the low incidence categories. There is more communication with the parents. There is a strong district support given to the school - district coordination and support. School Psych. Services are also good.

What are some of the challenges associated with the provision of effective Learning Assistance Services in your school ?

Time is the key one - helping teachers work with low incidence students. Supporting and directing the TA's is an issue. Need to look at needs monthly.

The new Ministry requirements (IEP and more restrictive definitions for SLD and Behaviour students).

Parent contact and trying to get them involved is very time consuming.

The level of existing resources is not adequate to meet the needs/demands ... too few staff for the number of students requiring help ... we can't keep up with all the referrals for service.

Consultation with classroom teachers is very difficult given time available

(theirs and ours) and the unwillingness on the part of some to deal with

" special needs " students or the lack of skills on the part of some to deal with special needs kids ... fearful attitudes ... lack of appropriate training.

The difficulty of LA Teachers (secondary) trying to keep up or to handle senior courses / specialty courses in order to assist or tutor students.

The " LA Lifers " ... especially those that fall " between the categories " ...the

" grey area " kids.

The " numbers " seem to be growing dramatically as does the " transient " nature of the kids requiring service.

The skill levels of Teacher Assistants needs addressing ... many are really not qualified ... no special training.

Technology ... haven't come very far in using technology ... special education seems to get the " leftovers " or gets left out entirely in terms of adequate equipment and software.

Transitional issues are always a challenge ... especially related to kids moving from elementary or middle schools into the high schools.

There appears to be a significant problem emerging ... many parents lacking parenting skills ... and also many who avoid involvement in the special services being planned or provided to their children.

There needs to be easier access to inservice / more inservice opportunities.

Assessment needs ... the time it takes to complete appropriate assessments at the school level (eg., Woodcock-Johnson = 4 hours) and also the " backlog " of district assessments ... Psychologists / Special Counsellors can't handle the demands ... especially given the Ministry Guideline / Requirements and the

" threat " of audits causing districts to assess and reassess all " designated students " with no time to assess other students.

Attempting the " inclusion model " without the appropriate level of resources ... forcing more and more " pull-out " or separate programs.

The lack of appropriate facilities ... having to move from room to room pushing around cart of materials ... space problems usually end up with loss of designated LA room.

Trying to manage when the resources are based on September snapshot only ... what about all the kids who show up at different intervals throughout the year ... where are the resources ? we have the kids !

Block LA funding does not pick up on the fact that some schools have a much higher incidence of LA / special needs kids (socio economic factors).

Administration and paperwork demands have increased dramatically ... documentation demands ... accountability demands ... tracking demands, etc.

The lack of resources to develop and run preventative programs.

The continuing difficulty of getting inter agency cooperation, involvement, resources and support.

The need to build in time and resources for teacher consultation, IEP meetings, parent and inter agency meetings, time for transition work near the end of the school year.

Trying to run the " full spectrum model " ... wide range of service provisions including intensive support.

Dealing with returning " home schooled students " and returning students from

some French Programs.

Getting teachers to modify curriculum and instruction strategies.

The demands of time for IEP work on the part of regular classroom teachers.

Timetabling difficulties (secondary) where LA students may not be available at certain times.

Need greater access to counselling services ... LA teachers are having to spend a great deal of time counselling students and also parents.

Need for effective training and qualification requirements governing the assignment of all LA teachers.

Having to wait until kids are 2 or more years behind before qualifying for service. A significant number of kids are appearing at school with serious language deficits and the lack of " attentive " skills.

Parent support - many parents don't support the program with reading at home. Lack of language skills - school has a lot of students with language problems - need more programs of a language nature to support students. Good identification procedures so not just the acting out students are identified. Organization of meetings, - involvement with other Ministries. Doing and providing support for parents. Doing more testing now as a result of discussion at S.B.T. meetings.

Coordinating services takes time. A frustration is lack of occupational and physio therapy services. District diagnostician time is insufficient. There is a long waiting list. Parents get angry.

Trying to meet the needs of all the kids who need help - only serving the neediest students. There are as many students again who need help. There are no computers in LA. Time for direct instruction. The consultative role and time in meeting takes away from direct instruction for students. There is also a lot of time in assessment. (Would usually give the PPVT, KTEA, informal reading inventory, the Brigance, also a gifted assessment). It is a challenge to find resources for intermediate students.

Working in the library, not having a specific place is a challenge. (Space issues). Not having parental cooperation is a frustration. These students need support for an extended period of time and they just don't get it. It's not an issue of caring, it's the skill level parents have. Wait list for diagnostic services is very long - up to 2 years.

Biggest challenge is what to do with students who choose not to do well. Should have more flexibility to accommodate different learning styles eg. should be OK to attend 2 hours and have access to electronic learning, correspondence etc. View all of this as under the umbrella of 'Learning Assistance'. Need computer courses for things like Geography 12. Need to deliver services in different ways to kids who are opting out of traditional school day. Challenge is to move away from highly integrated model that we have in order to address life skills, kids need to function after they leave school.

Time - not enough time to meet with parents - time to deliver service. Paper work takes away from time with students. Delivery of service - some need pull out but it's tough to pull kids out of class - so we have an after school program called The Homework Club. Perspective of teachers, comfort zones, dynamics of the home

and trying to meet all these is a challenge. The demands of paper work limits time with the students. Teachers spend a lot of time doing paper work.

Some kids who don't qualify for funding are more needy than the ones who do. Some SLD kids can be accommodated in class with minimal support and other kids require much more support. The challenge is to get to everybody. "I never walk out feeling I've done more than hit the tops of things". "I'm putting out a lot of fires". if you're doing all the paperwork you're not spending as much time with the kids. The paperwork is getting worse and worse. Demand on classroom teachers-have huge demands and large class sizes. Everything seems to be added on and nothing taken away. Kids are different now than 15 years ago. How to deal with violence, incidents of drinking, kids need to be taught manners, respect for each other. More kids need T.L.C. Emotional lives are in turmoil. Paper work means more and more clerical work for teachers. If teachers had the technology it would help - eg. a laptop computer for the teacher would help. This bumps in the question why are we here - are we here to be bureaucrats or are we here to be teachers? The amount of in-school testing required takes away from teaching time. "We're gone over the deep end of testing and documentation." Can't make assumptions we used to - can't count on homework being done, that parents will show up for scheduled meetings. Many kids are unsupervised before and after school. Sometimes I worry that more assistance can make kids more dependent ! Reporting for kids who receive modified programs is challenging. Seems that many kids have missed critical windows of opportunity to learn eg., language development and it's hard to make that up. Attention span of kids seems to have changed. Kids are more destructible.

Not enough time, not enough money. The need is incredible. A third to 40% of students need assistance. It is a challenge to come up with alternates for students who can not make the regular curriculum. The effect of capping in high incidence categories puts a strain on LA as there are more moderate behavior and SLD students than reflected in "The Caps"; there is a wide range of kids being served in LA - including ASHD kids. There are many "slow learning" students who need to be accommodated. The growing number of students with unusual needs is bringing the school near the breaking point.

Taking on additional students in the LA program as a result of cutbacks in other areas is a concern - eg., tighter definition of SLD and ESL. Would like to have an on - line program which would track kids. Still a challenge to keep teachers informed on a quarter system when you're serving 200 kids. This is biggest challenge - to keep teachers informed. For students on modified programs, appropriate materials is a challenge. Coping with the diversity of difficulties that have become the responsibility of LA teachers.

Full cooperation of parents can sometimes be a challenge. Space has historically been a problem. Budget for time is a major issue - school has 0.5 allocation from the district. Last year it was 0.6. Having students for short periods of time and having high expectations for change in achievement puts a lot of pressure on the teacher. People skills are important - you have to learn to "go with the flow" - dealing with all the teachers takes a lot of skill. There is a lot expected of the LA teacher. There needs to be more work done on making LA high profile - encourage collaboration.

Time is a critical factor - how to meet with teachers to do IEP's during class time. Part time LA teachers present a special difficulty. LA time may be shared with resource time to free a full time job. LA teachers are frustrated at the expectations while their time has been reduced. Time to coordinate and liaison with other professional is challenging.

Finding out about the students when the file is not well documented. Finding a balance between helping with skills and giving independence to the student. Enrichment opportunities are a challenge and there is no common time - it interrupts classes. Maintaining records - the paper work - is the biggest challenge. Making sure everyone knows what they need to in order to help the student. Making sure you're current on all the course work is a challenge when you provide tutorial service. It takes students a long time to see the benefit of study skill. They want immediate help with assignments. Ensuring students have appropriate assessment is difficult - eg. for adjudication. Getting others to realize the importance of LA services. It's a hard service to explain. There is a lot of mis - perception on the part of staff.

Time is a big factor - the meetings are after school, before or after school. The amount of paper work takes away from lesson planning - record keeping, IEP's, reports to teachers. Every team meeting is documented and goes out to all concerned. Timetabling the pull-out students so kids feel OK about coming out is always a challenge. The limited amount of time in LA compared to the number of students needing help is a challenge. There are student and parental attitudes that are sometimes hard to overcome. Sometimes the school gets the whole problem.

Time - time for meetings, time for developing programs that are new, time to see kids, SBT meetings are time consuming, time to do referrals for district services, paper work is quite extensive. Time-lag between referral to District services and receiving the assessment service. Although we don't have severe behavior problems in our caseload, there is little time to assist teachers with behavior problem students in the classrooms.

There are some kids who get lost in the system - even though teachers receive IEP's and notes, they do get lost. There are many students who are "case managed" but as LA teachers we don't see them. These are some of the students who get lost. We're addressing this next year. The timetable is a big " bug-a-boo " at the secondary level.

Attending to all the needs - there are so many needs - there is a lot of Social Skill need/Behavior need. In a middle school, you don't see the progress as quickly as in a primary school. Don't have the perspective of having LA in the primary grades. Can't have a buddy system with younger kids. Materials at lower reading levels. Grouping kids who have difficulties is a challenge - get all the 'bouncy' kids. Need to work with teachers so that kids are not 'punished' for pull-out time by having to do work missed in class. Staffing with part time and LA teachers working in 2 schools is a challenge. Stability of staff is a challenge - there is a lot of movement. Keeping up with the paperwork is a challenge. Keeping up with parent contacts - many parents work a 12 hour shift, so this is done mainly in the evenings.

The instability created by collective agreement provisions and the " bumping of LA Teachers ".

What affect is the requirement of IEP's for students receiving 25 or more hours of service having on :

- **the workload of LA teachers**
- **the ability of LA teachers to manage student needs/caseload demands**
- **the involvement of parents**
- **the provision of service to students**

Teacher and LA work on IEP's together. IEP's do add a workload problem.

The change to 25 hours makes me feel better as I don't need to do IEP's on groups of kids that come in for short term instruction... Sometimes wonder if I should be doing more IEP's. Time for IEP's is a problem. Frustration with lack of outside services. I monitor my caseload and consult with teachers. Current caseload is 37 - in 8 groups. Over course of a year would work with 60 - 70 students (School has 360 students). For major groups, send a letter to parents... Think of it as a contract. Would usually telephone parents before sending the letter home.

Much has to be done in the evenings ... try not to take away from student time.

We use two district forms ... a short form (LA) and a long form for designated students. ... we consider the IEP a " working document " and refer to it constantly.

At least 15 % of my time is taken up with the administration of the IEP requirement... this cuts into the time available for direct service.

It is helping to involve and better inform parents... but there are other ways this can be accomplished... it does make parents feel wanted and a part of it all.

It helps students by keying them in to the program and it lets them give input to the program or service planned ... it lets them know results which they really do want to know.

I would have to do 45 - 50 IEP's .... I'm currently doing 20 - 25 and having trouble keeping up.

All but one of our teachers has indicated that they find the IEP valuable and useful.

The IEP serves a valuable purpose in the transition of students ... it allows transition tracking ... especially for students moving from school to school or to another school district.

Horrendous workload ... especially when operating on a Quarter System... as a result we don't do IEP's for LA students (we're not required to ?).

There is much duplication ... IEP for LA then IEP for district service referral then IEP for student in a designated funding category.

How do you always know that the child is going to require 25 hours of

service ? ... this will depend on individual progress and ongoing assessment... and could lead to formal IEP's after the fact !

The IEP requirement helps to hold regular classroom teachers accountable....it provides a " paper trail ".

It is not a big issue ... we have an IEP format on Disk / template (computer).

Takes considerable time ... especially in September and then again in May and June ... with much time spent in the evenings and on weekends ... often service is delayed at the start of the school year because of all the paperwork required.

It is tying up professionals to do paperwork and we can't keep up to referrals.

Doesn't make much difference since when students are referred, they are long term. We would write the IEP anyway. Hasn't had any effect. Writing IEP's is very

time consuming. No change. No change as almost all students are long term kids.

Kids are already coming with an IEP, so it has had no impact. Change from 15 to 25 hours has had no impact. Parental involvement is good - change in no. of hours has had no impact.

Increases the workload - have to do the paperwork, the team meetings, reviews. The time factor is not necessarily the way to look at whether or not there needs to be an IEP. The needs of the student is a better indicator - eg., some students who receive minimal direct service require an IEP. Yes there is a significant impact on workload - for example if you take on a student who fits in a group and receives that amount of instruction, then you are obligated to go through the IEP process for that child.... Yes - since the IEP process demands a higher involvement - before we would have notified parents and written an anecdotal insert at reporting time.... We would provide service anyway !

Doesn't take much to make 25 hours. "I've done over 30 IEP's this year. It increases my frustration, as it's a job that goes to the bottom of the priority list", "When you work in-class , at what point do you add up the hours ?" The work of classroom teachers in terms of providing 'learning assistance' is not acknowledged by this requirement. In some ways, labelling and pulling out kids destroys the 'classroom community'... Decreases ability to manage caseloads because of the paperwork. We've always talked to parents. In some ways it makes parents more nervous as it seems so formal. There is a lot of concern about labelling. The meetings now take longer. We try to stay with the kids. Reality is, is that this paperwork gets done on teacher's own time.

No impact yet. Do not agree that every kid in LA should have an IEP. The paper work should not interfere with the time the teacher has with the student. Principal has made a unilateral decision not to do this during the year. Involvement of parents will be examined next year. If some students receive less instructional time because of this rule it will be too bad.

For the modified students, it has made a significant amount of work - would rather be with the kids than doing the paper work! Parents are involved in the discussions - there is ongoing contact about twice a month.

Not really clear on expectations for IEP's .... have heard a lot of conflicting opinions on this.

"Where I do IEP's I do them regardless".

" I just don't do IEP's - I don't have the time". " Students are responsibility of the classroom teacher and I follow programs for them". " I do full reports on students for each reporting period. The report lists the program goals and the progress the child is making toward these goals".

IEP change from 15-25 hours.... " I do IEP's for everyone I see, so this change hasn't meant anything". " An IEP documents the goals and support and demonstrates that services have been provided. The parent component and the documentation of progress made is essential. " IEP's are to do with goal orientation, so the stipulation of hours doesn't impact on me".

IEP's - most parent contact is by phone at this level. Students usually report to their own parents. IEP's for 25+ group is not necessarily more work. Timing the IEP's is the crucial thing - making sure it's done so teachers know what to do. A key factor is that the student is a participant in the process, making sure the timetable is

appropriate is the critical factor - have to get to know the child and help them see the value in the service. Out of this grows the IEP. Tutorial services provides services to kids and if they need an IEP, they get one. The IEP is based on IEP, not the amount of time they receive service - eg. if the student needs an hour or so a month of editing and everyone needs to know this, then this is documented on an IEP.

IEP's - have increased paper work and work load. But IEP's are important as you have to look at whole student and establish goals. If we didn't have to develop IEP's we might just do it in our heads and might waste time being side tracked. It's important to be organized. I'm taking a course on IEP's and I'll be able to use informal observations better, rather than formal assessment which may not be useful in programming. The change from 15 hrs. to 25 hrs. has not made a difference as kids are seen on a regular basis. All students receiving service have an IEP. Parents come in to sign the IEP and it is discussed with them. Gives a chance for them to express their concerns and receive their in-put. Helps parents work through the child's needs. After this meeting parents are more willing to call and keep in contact. Has not had an affect on the number of students receiving service.

IEP's .... haven't done much differently - have always done a short form IEP on students receiving LA services. If I had to do a lengthy IEP, it would be a problem. Parents are in and out of the school all the time, so it's easy to talk to them.

IEP's ... its a time- consuming difficult process - tough to coordinate with all the teachers involved. Process is done more by phone to parents and by mailbox with teachers. The 25 hour requirement has not had an impact on practice in the school - kids are timetabled in to alternate classes or a block of LA. IEP's are more of a record keeping thing. We do IEP's anyway.

IEP's ... use last year's IEP - the year end summary is used as a beginning point. Meet with teachers in September and then present a draft to the parents. LA students on the caseload have an IEP. For new IEP's it comes after the referral - target is to have IEP's completed within reasonable time frames.

Impact of 25 hour requirement - in previous years some students would come along with a group and an IEP was not required. Now all students who receive service have an IEP. The critical variable for an IEP is more student need - not hours of instruction. For example, the student who is accommodated through consultation and monitored by the LA may be quite successful and needs should be documented through an IEP. The flip side is that when kids are designated as 'IEP kids", some ownership is removed from the classroom teacher. In this sense, there should be leeway to work with a student for say 50 hours before doing an IEP.

What can you suggest that would significantly improve the delivery of Learning Assistance Services to students in schools ?

Revise formula for staffing - would like a needs formula giving a minimum amount of LA time to ensure principals don't " skim it off ".

The model should be a " student services " model ... non - categorical ... resource teacher / resource team approach ... and there should be a move to a heavier focus on working with classroom teachers ... in classrooms.

Need to recognize that many classroom teachers do not have the appropriate training (and attitudes) for dealing with special needs students and to provide significant inservice and re-training programs to ensure they retain/accept "

ownership " and can provide special programs and services with a willing and accepting attitude.

There needs to be a sharing of technology applications for LA programs / students ... need more services like the " Inclusion Hotline " ... need Internet sharing.... put IEP formats on " Web Page ".

Ministry should accept more " adaptations/modifications " concerning LA students and the writing of exams.

The Ministry must alter its guidelines and funding for LA to reflect the reality out in the system ... the " LA student and the LA program " are disappearing or changing to " Special Needs students in Resource Programs "... the present guidelines and funding are not consistent with all the changes that have occurred.

Ensure funding for LA and other special programs are " clearly visible " and targeted to ensure accountability at both the district and school levels ... otherwise the funding will disappear.

The Ministry funding system should allow for student transiency ... to ensure the " funding follows the kid "... and the system should be made more flexible to account for students arriving in schools after official enrolment counts.

Provide a standardized list of materials for French LA.

" IEP " carries a lot of baggage ... need to come up with something that is more " user friendly "... we should look at the spirit of the IEP and the processes involved rather than focusing on a " document ".

There is a need to tackle the readiness issue (pre-school literacy) so as to head off " future LA students ".

Need more educational technology programs like " Success Maker " (self-paced learning) and the resources to purchase.

There is a need for modified Learning Outcomes for elective courses in secondary schools.

The Ministry needs to recognize in its guidelines and funding the distinction between elementary and secondary schools and the delivery of Learning Assistance Services.

Need greater clarification from the Ministry related to IEP's (What are they ? How might they vary ? Different exemplars and templates) ?

Need to examine the Letter Grade issue ... students in grade 7 who have IEP's want a report card with letter grades like their friends and peers.

Re-institute the Regional Centers for SLD!

Access to more outside services. Knowledge of more program areas - eg. language programs, fine motor programs. More ability to implement programs as students need daily practice. More classroom materials to support content subjects at a lower reading level - eg. Social Studies materials at easy reading levels. More LA time. Less paper work - eg. writing IEP's, referrals, letters to community groups. Need to hire qualified LA teachers. Some principals will do LA as a way of rounding out their admin. time and LA gets the " short stick ".

Factors other than FTE students should be considered for allocation of LA services.... factors like transience, socio economic make up. Documented need should be the variable. Need should be the driving force for allocation. Resources should go where the needs are. Targeted funding should remain in order to maintain the priority for LA services. There is no resource allocation for LA materials. When curriculum areas are revised, there is implementation money, this is not true for LA.

Computer programs accommodate different learning styles better - more programs like 'Success Maker'. Need to spend money to customize different services to kids.

Reduced class sizes would eliminate many issues. Legitimately recognized meeting time - so that you didn't have to " rob Peter to pay Paul ". The assumption that LA students will need only a little help is not necessarily true. These kids frequently have these difficulties all the way through school. A core curriculum for each grade would be helpful. The curriculum is too big. This would make it easier for parents to understand too.

Improve reporting so that modified programming can be graded - would be better if there was a core curriculum, so that so many kids weren't considered modified.

Reduction in terms of paperwork would enable teachers to feel more job satisfaction. There have to be ways of documenting accountability in less time consuming ways and enable teachers to be more productive.

Mandatory training programs at University level for new teachers.

Access to technology would help give us the tools to do the job.

Also secretarial assistance to Special Education would help.

Constant time for LA would help.

Branches of the Ministry should be more together - eg. reporting issue / letter grades.

There should be ensured continuity that schools receive LA service - there always seems to be a threat over whether the service will be in place in subsequent years. There needs to be stability in this program area.

The needs of students rather than the hours for an IEP would be a better focus.

Re-examine the requirements for IEP's so teachers spend most time with kids.

There should be no cuts to LA services as more and more students are requiring services. " LA is cheaper than jail". LA deals with low end kids and with LA they get through. If LA wasn't there, they'd fail.

A supportive role by the Ministry in facilitating the sharing of materials and best practice would help.

A more flexible approach rather than regulating the number of hours requiring an IEP would be beneficial. A school needs to have some discretion. More time would enable more students to be serviced.

If there were a greater variety of materials for students - at different reading levels

and different content, many of the problems would be solved.

Better software programs to enable teachers to access information on students. Electronic tracking between School Districts would be very beneficial, especially to secondary schools. " A universal, software package".

What is the ceiling on LA - we never know how many we're going to have? Funding for LA and high incidence should be predictable and not based so much on specifically identified students.

Greater flexibility for identification of special needs at the school level. There are kids who require so much more support and we need more flexibility as to how TA's work in the school.

The SBT should have some say in how the TA works, rather than get that direction from the district. The SBT should have more power re: who gets service in the school.

LA needs a higher profile - to have a definite statement of how assistance is given. There needs to be high standards for hiring and qualification stipulations. There needs to be a definite inservice program for LA teachers.

Would like to see strengths of LA program published in the paper. Disclose the information from the study!

It is important to feel you're not working in isolation. LA teacher is facilitator, innovator and LA teacher needs to be able to take this role on. Recognition of what LA teachers do is important.

There is not an awareness of what LA teachers contribute or can contribute to the school. Interpersonal skills/people skills are so important in this role - so inservice on the collaborative role would be helpful.

Effectiveness of LA program depends on cooperative / collaborative approach.

Workshops in communications skills would be helpful.

Administration generally needs to have a greater awareness of what an LA could offer the school. They should be part of the leadership team in the school.

Knowledge of conflict resolution and problem solving skills are essential for the LA teacher. Big message is that this program is an integral part of the school. LA teacher works with teachers to develop a code of work excellence on the part of the students.

Accurate student history would be helpful, especially at this level.

Giving parents an accurate view of the services is important - we do it through a newsletter and a" blurb " in the student calendar.

Important to have a good connection with School District Services - eg. School Psychology. It's hard to keep this contact at the secondary level.

More time, continuity is important. School has been reduced from 0.8 LA/Sp. Ed. to 0.6 so now the students can only be seen 3 times a week.

Better access to materials and resources would help. It seems each LA teacher has

to research this. Each teacher has to invent this.

Templates for some of the paperwork - eg. a template for team meetings or IEP's.

A newsletter from the Branch for LA's would be helpful. This would help teachers keep abreast of new developments.

More opportunity for LA/Resource teachers to meet and share.

More time, more money. We make do with what we can scrape out of the budget. The fragmented special education job is very difficult for teachers - eg., LA/Inclusion/Prep time/etc. is very hard. More full time jobs would be better.

Secondary teachers who are trained in making modifications to instructional strategies.

A bigger repertoire of instructional strategies and better "counselling skills" for all teachers, as well as orientation to the gifted. So often we see that the problem rests in the child - very often its in the environment and in the instruction.

Secondary schools should not be such a slave to the timetable. The struggle between remediation and content support should be resolved.

Identification continues to be an issue - better identification procedures should be in place. Many students come to the school as LA and their problems seem more severe.

A clear union of LA and Special Services would help if it were there across the system. Need to understand where we've been, where we are and where we need to go. This would help with allocation of resources. Those who drive the policy and procedures should have a clear understanding of a conceptual framework for policy development.

Increased assistance time in class - more TA time would help the classroom. This supports all the kids.

More team teaching, cooperative teaching with teachers. There are efficiencies that could be gained in terms of time used in the classroom - time spent on explaining for example.

Professional development for LA teachers needs to continue and be increased. Also a need to have pro - d for regular classroom teachers on how to work with students who have learning difficulties. Need to examine pre - service education for teachers in terms of knowledge of exceptionalities. Should have an aspect of professional development which focuses on "refocus" of what teaching is about. The culture of the school needs to be addressed.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Report Supplement 1: Comments Summary

Teacher Meetings

Summary of Responses

A. PROGRAM DIRECTION

How is program direction for Learning Assistance determined and set out in the district ?

There is an LA Teacher Association and there is work being done on an LA Handbook. Direction is coming from the LA teachers, not the district. The role has been expanding, so teachers themselves are developing best practice statements for the District.

We have a manual developed...Try to follow ministry guidelines. We refer to the Ministry Manual re policy and procedures.

Model as written in Learning Assistance Program Binder developed by committee of L.A.T.'s/district staff.

Learning Assistance Handbook developed by the district in conjunction with a neighboring district.

District Handbook/Ministry Handbook. School based model - depending on needs (SBT/Admin.). LA District Meetings.

Determined by the Special Education Department. About 10-12 yrs. ago a manual was devised for program direction, this has been superceded by a draft from our Superintendent.

Set out in district handbook and district job description.

Booklet (but out of date). School Based Teams. Very little direction from district; little in writing. No clear focus. Full time LA vs Short Term LA always being argued - conflicting information.

There is a handbook from the district. The district provides a lot of inservice and through these meetings direction is given.

Follow the Ministry handbook - next year all LA teachers will be Student Services Resource Teachers - there is a student services handbook that is based on the Ministry guidelines.

As per policy in handbook (Special Education) and SB Team referrals.

School based - varies within district based on need and philosophy and diversity of student population.

School based team (school level). Support services manual - lay out for protocol. LA Association leadership.

We have " modified vs adjusted program " guidelines.

The individual school decides what the direction will be.

It seems the direction is set by the timetable and administration decisions.

How is the program defined / determined at the school level ?

Needs of school, needs of students, determine the program. The LA program is very school-based.

In high school - largely determined from Administration. In elementary determined collaboratively.

School Based Team / staff direction.

LA Handbook/ School Based Team.

School Based Team. Admin./Teacher collaboration. Student Needs.

Consultation /collaboration with teachers/SBT. Principal has defined parameters of LA. Professional autonomy.

LA teachers and in some schools, in collaboration with SBT and staff. Some staffs surveyed. Administrative Officer decides in some schools.

The personality of the teacher, the needs of the students in the school. The Student Services Coordinator at the school level has some impact - the teachers' teaching style, age of students, space available, numbers of students requiring service all impact on how services are provided.

Referrals come from teachers - each school has a needs list - services provided depending on the style of the teacher and the needs of the students. Time is also a factor. Priorities are made based on need and consensus by the SBT. Early intervention is being discussed as a priority now.

School based team, staff committee - usually after referral by parent, teacher or student.

Defined by need, history of practice. Decision- making from administration. Also depends on teacher style (in class support vs. - out of class support).

School based decisions based on teacher needs, and student population needs.

B. SERVICE DELIVERY

Are Leaning Assistance Services differentiated from other school-based services provided to 'designated' special education students, or are special education services "seamless" at the school level ?

LA services are delivered to referred students - may or may not be in high incidence categories. LA teachers do not usually work with low incidence students. LA teachers do work with severe behavior students.

Reality at elementary level is that the service is different but compared to the high school it would be considered a seamless approach.

Services differ in terms of designation in each school - tend to overlap, but not at this time, we are using a full "seamless" approach.

We work together but teacher contract assures that we each look after our own caseload depending on qualifications.

Varies greatly depending on individual schools.Varies from seamless to very differentiated.

Often is driven by the fact that many LA teachers have " combination assignments " covering a variety of special needs.

Differentiated in many instances.... so moving towards a more collaborative model of support to teachers at the elementary level. However LA teachers are generally quite different from other support teachers. More global in approach.

Services differentiated. Not seamless.

There is very little difference between LA and other special education programs. The students all receive IEP's and the needier students have more extensive IEP's. Services tend to be integrated so that teachers have one support person.

By and large, in most schools services are integrated - there is only the LA teacher. In larger schools, there are some differentiated services - notably high schools.

Varies within district but generally "pull-out" model delivered by Special Education teacher or teacher assistant (S.E.T.A.)-in classroom for support.

No ! we have moved to a " Resource Model "... just like the Ministry Guidelines describe.

Seems to depend on the size of the school district.

Depending on teacher skill and preference. School services are sometimes separated into LA and Special Education and at other times they are combined.

What are some of the positive features of Learning Assistance Services delivered in schools ?

Able to work 1:1 and in small groups. The SBT concept allows services to be provided in an indirect way. SBT approach allows shared ownership. LA program allows children to develop social skills in a comfortable, safe environment. Needs can be better identified in the 1:1 or small group setting.

LA programs prevent problems. Emphasis on early literacy is proactive. LA at the secondary level works well because of individualized help. There is a culture of support. Parents know their children are receiving support. Parents are involved in their child's program through the IEP. LA is a direct support to regular class teachers - through materials support, strategies.

Skill development - very positive in elementary schools. Secondary - provides an alternate school type of environment.

Availability, flexibility. LA's do not have long "wait lists", good communication between classrooms and home. Students do benefit from small group instruction.

" Safe Place - Safe Environment " for many students ... a nurturing environment

which assists greatly in improving students' self-esteem and confidence ... where they can experience success.

Provides the small group intensive instruction that some students need.

Teacher support, flexible, student attitudes, parent support.

Support for classroom teacher, screening process, transition, LA teacher commonly chairs SBT mtg./providing resources. Process is collaborative and flexible re: scheduling, case load, responsive to school needs.

Support to classroom teachers, extra attention, support and encouragement, smaller, safer work environment, modified/adapted programs. Assessment, IEP's.

Self esteem for students, SBT organization, peer tutoring, coordination of special services and teachers, direct teaching of strategies/skills, "safe" zone for students, first level of screening for other and/or outside district support services, assessment/evaluation of students for many different reasons.

Help for 'regular' students, borderline students and ESL. Broad range of referrals. Chance to support students in a personal way, quasi-counselling service, opportunities for direct instruction at skill level. Peer tutor course - great asset for leadership. Saving at-risk kids. Assessments by LA teacher, wide knowledge of students in the school.

"They are a great help - they are a sounding board, take run-around pressure off me when looking for materials" - (classroom teacher). " The LA teachers have experience and training, as a classroom teacher, I appreciate that they understand Ministry expectations, they know the materials and are helpful with students".

The needs of students are being met in classrooms, the testing and update testing in this district is good. Collaboration with the child psychologist is excellent. Opportunities for collaboration between LA and classroom teachers is very positive. SBT meetings are positive.

Direction from the District (District VP) is excellent.... accessible and helpful.... ..... knows most of the students in the district. The district is well supported with materials and staff. Inservice is provided by the district.

At the high school there is a tutorial service - there is no stigma to coming to the room.

"As a classroom teacher, I appreciate the help with IEP's, suggestions for materials. It's an essential service as far as I'm concerned. I couldn't do it if it weren't for the support".

Program allows us to have a continuous progress system. We rarely repeat kids like they do elsewhere.

LA is a communal source of information on kids - helpful from year to year.

" LA provides for successful transitions and gets kids 'plugged in' to programs they need as they go on to Junior Secondary etc. LA teacher provides a vehicle for the teacher to discuss ways to accommodate students' problem- solving. LA often helps teacher know what kids can do - as a classroom teacher you know what they can't do ".

Enables regular classroom teacher to have support. One-to-one guidance/instruction for LA students.

Holistic approach which includes all students that have a need. Flexibility throughout the year.

Flexibility in meeting student and teacher needs inside or outside the classroom. Team problem-solving and discussion through school based team model. Another child advocate apart from the classroom teacher. Provides continuity for students as they move through the grades. Recognition and validation of diversity. Demystification of learning profile. Allows opportunities to co-teach and team teach.

The flexibility of the resource.

The effective and efficient use of Teachers' Assistants ... "doubling up / assisting with special needs kids but also some of the regular students and also helping the regular class teacher as well as the special education teacher ".

What are some of the challenges associated with the provision of effective Learning Assistance Services in schools ?

The paper work required is sometimes overwhelming.

Time - there is never enough time.

LA is at risk of being " cut ". Non- enroling teachers are always at risk for being "cut ". There is no staffing formula for LA in the district. Thus there are inconsistencies. There should be a minimum standard.

The best IEP may not be implemented due to lack of support. OT/PT services are lacking, as are other specialty services such as individual testing and SLP (Speech and Language) services.

Space is a challenge in many schools. There is not an adequate space for the LA program. Availability of good materials is lacking. How to work-in services for the gifted is an area which needs to be addressed.

High need, too many children, not enough money, too many ESL students, inadequate physical space to conduct the program.

LA has become a " catch all " for all students with special needs.

Learning Assistance funding channelled away to meet needs of " low incidence " students.

Lack of continuity to the service ... LA teacher assignments changing ... LA teachers having to move from school to school ... reduction in LA time allocations causing a re-ordering of priorities ... changing the nature of caseloads ... disrupting service to some students who have to be dropped off the list.

There are too many demands being placed on LA teachers ... expecting them to deal with the whole spectrum of special needs.

There is a big challenge in that many regular classroom teachers find it extremely difficult to deal with some special needs kids ... and this can directly affect whether or not the service can be consultative rather than " pull-out ".

Central administration cuts are affecting schools directly ... less support ... and some " downloading " of responsibilities / paperwork and administration.

Lack of time to service students effectively "band aid" approach, lack of resources - materials - budget cut, time for communication with teachers and parents.

Acting as " mentors " to new teachers takes up considerable time and energy !

Trying to provide alternate / remedial materials without " worrying about copyright provisions ".

Kids falling " between the categories " because of the Ministry tightening up or changing definitions.... the borderline / grey area students.

The nature of students is changing dramatically ... lack of adequate speech and language readiness ... lack of attentive skills ... social - emotional problems and very difficult behaviour problems.

Expecting the LAT to act as the school coordinator for all special programs ... also expecting LAT's to direct and supervise the work of several Teacher Assistants assigned to the school.

Lack of secretarial assistance to help LAT's handle all the record keeping / paperwork associated with special programs.

Lack of " coverage time " / release time for all the meetings required (SBT meetings, inter-agency meetings, meetings with classroom teachers, meetings with parents, etc.) and for planning time !

A grouping / pull-out approach is being " forced " because of the lack of appropriate resources ... efficiency at the expense of in-class support and consultation with regular classroom teachers.

At the secondary level it is virtually impossible to meet with all the teachers of an LA student for planning, strategies etc. ... there is just not the time ... and the timetable often gets in the way.

Accessing community resources remains a problem ... can't get involvement, cooperation and resources from other agencies.

Having to cope with the added pressure of French Immersion " drop-outs " and Home Schooling " drop-outs " who have become LA students in need.

There is a need for greater attention to early intervention programs .... should be LA for Kindergarten kids and perhaps a return to K-1 programs or " protected class " approach.

Time to talk to teachers, time to do paperwork, time for testing, time must be for direct service not more paperwork.

The " IEP and paperwork crunch " at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year .... often at the beginning of the year service to kids is delayed because of all the administrative/paperwork requirements.

Smaller schools can experience time not available to students because administrator is LA teacher. Not enough FTE to provide for all the students who could benefit. Resource Room (SLD) cutbacks are putting more stress on LA

resources. Can become a 'real dumping ground' when no other resources are available.

Not enough time to effectively service all children who require extra assistance. Lack of time to collaborate with teachers, and to effectively operate as a School-Based Team.

Lack of recognition of professionalism by district. District forms and protocols. Categorizing for meeting budgetary requirements rather than treating child as an individual. Reduction of support services in other areas has resulted in unrealistic "case" loads. Amount of meetings required. IEP's for direct monitoring students (adapted/modified). Time for coordinating, for assessments, for consultation/collaboration, for operating the SBT.

Growing ESL population. Timetabling challenges. Students being pulled out of special resource rooms and now being directed to LA. Cutbacks of all pre - employment programs. LA teachers at several schools - double work load. Who does the IEP's for modified and adapted program students? Training and time. Classroom teachers not trained in IEP's. No standardized IEP's. LA must 'manufacture' resources. No Resource Centre.

Uneven level of service. LA service determined by the number of students in a school, not by the number of needy students per school. Many schools in one part of the district have a much higher need. (Inner City funding does not give us enough money to address all these needs).

While at one school you may find a student with a certain level of achievement getting service, if that student moved to another school he or she would not be considered needy enough.... inconsistency !

Increased numbers of challenging students no longer qualify for resource room, so limited LA time has to be shared by them.... thereby diluting or even eliminating service to other students.

Large time-gaps between suspecting a student needs resource room support, referring, testing and eventual placement. Two of my present 5 LA students will be in Resource Room next year (or at least they qualify). Another student will not be tested until the fall. These 3 students have had long term- gr. 1, gr. 2 and now gr. 3 LA. There was no real opportunity to refer less needy students that might need just a little boost (true remedial students).

Provision of services at the High School level are more difficult. Dealing with many teachers, different teaching styles is a challenge. Access to materials at upper intermediate is difficult.

Demands on time - there are more administrative demands - eg., time for meetings, IEP reviews, need to find ways to accomplish this efficiently. As a general Special/LA teacher there are demands in many areas - Behavior, SLD, etc. If the LA isn't qualified, then they can't provide the same level of service.

Administrators doing LA work is not as successful.

The numbers of students receiving service are high... but we are still not meeting the demands ! There is a growing population which is quite different than what we have experienced in the past.

Cutbacks have meant less time. Our LA works with 20% of the kids in the school.

The variety we have to deal with is a challenge.

Smaller communities don't have the outside support agencies, so there is more reliance on the school. With cutbacks, LA's have to wear more than one hat - eg., prep time relief, and this is very challenging. With part time LA's it's hard to fit in meetings with parents, etc.

With time constraints, students with mild/moderate difficulties often aren't seen until they become severe. If we continue with cutbacks and aren't able to provide programs at the correct level of difficulty, we'll have more behavior problems.

Time involved to sort out who's responsible for student learning profiles. Fragmentation of service. Possible conflicts in idea of "case management".

Increasing number of students within this category. Time to write IEP's for those receiving services. Diversity of needs for other services - ie., counselling, speech - language.

There are just too many children who need assistance but don't receive it. Time that it takes from referral to action. Paperwork. Resistance to new directions in Special Education delivery. Being put in the position of "choosing" to direct time towards paperwork or direct work with students. Current reporting procedures. IEP meetings - too many especially for high school.

We are noticing a significant increase in the number of students who come to school and experience learning difficulties. The reasons for this are complex, but we would note that one important contributing factor is, that for many students, reading and writing and math activities are "something done to them at school" not activities which they participate in at home. Increasingly passive media-related activities - - such as TV or Nintendo - occupy their leisure time, and reading and writing are not activities they witness outside of school. Reading, especially reading for pleasure, is valued and heavily emphasized at our school, and yet we continue to work with students who experience great difficulty with reading. Math remediation is another area of concern, as many students are unable to retain understanding of concepts that have been taught year after year.

This increase in students requiring assistance is exacerbated by increases in class sizes due to reduced staffing budgets. The typical student requiring learning assistance does not need a 5 week skill-specific "fix" but tends to require the ongoing support of a Learning Assistance teacher. As students get older, and the curriculum becomes more complex and demanding, such students fall further and further behind which leads to other related problems (avoidance, misbehaviour, lack of self-esteem, unwillingness to attempt or complete work).

Further compounding the problem is current emphasis on "gradedness," (ie., grade 4, grade 5, grade 6). This emphasis can be seen to contradict the Principles of Learning, which are well-supported in educational research, which appear in the beginning of every Ministry document, and which reflect the reality of most teacher's classrooms. A tendency to a more strict interpretation of "gradedness" can mean that students are being expected to master a curriculum that is not developmentally appropriate for them, compounding their personal learning difficulties, and increasing their need for support services.

We are noticing at our level more students who may have had well-developed coping strategies to get them through elementary school, and who "surface" at middle school, no longer able to cope with the more diverse curriculum expectations. Students at this age level are typically increasingly self-conscious

and are often unwilling to be "pulled-out" for individual service. This has a big impact on how "efficiently" resource staff can be deployed. In our case, much learning assistance support is provided in the context of the regular classroom program.

We are uncertain of the formula the Ministry uses to decide appropriate levels of learning assistance support/staff, but it is definitely too little. Similarly, the staffing formula allocation for students with learning difficulties is too little. In a time when we are seeing more and more students requiring assistance, we are also seeing the Ministry apply more stringent service eligibility criteria.

Rather than have students remain on "waitlists" we are stretching ourselves very thin trying to offer services to as many students as we can, while still maintaining quality and accountability. It creates great stress to know that students needing help are not receiving it. We are powerless to do anything to improve students' preparation before they come to school, or to improve other factors in their lives that may affect their learning. We can only assist them "here and now, " with thoughtful planning and appropriate interventions.

We have many learning assistance students who also require / receive support from counsellors, child and youth care workers, to help them deal with social/emotional problems. These may stem from their learning difficulties, and often from their home lives, from their difficulties with adolescence. Although we do not have data at our fingertips, it is our perception that more families are dealing with unemployment, substance abuse, poverty, divorce, etc., which has serious impact on our students and makes school and learning more difficult. Being a learning resource teacher is also being an advocate, and trying to assist with learning while negotiating all of the other competing priorities for our kids.

It seems that Learning Assistance is the first to be cut. With dwindling resources, teachers need to have a resource person, someone who can zero in on the needs of students with learning disabilities to bring their skills up to grade level. It is getting more difficult every year to meet the needs of every student in the classroom. With the integration of special needs students and their aide time being cut, dealing with Attention Deficit students, students where English is a Second Language, and constant new curriculum, the Learning Assistance teacher is a most valuable resource.

Within existing resources, what can you suggest that would significantly improve the delivery of Learning Assistance Services to students in schools ?

Increased personnel - very true at the Middle School level.

LA teachers should be consulted for space requirements.

Need more people coming in that have qualifications as outlined by the Ministry.

Need to critically examine how we are using all our money in low/high incidence areas.

Establish LA pupil / teacher ratio. More money and resources. Release time for SBT chairing and conferencing time.

Support resources for "Reading Recovery " in elementary. More time to develop IEP's. More time, training, resources for adapted and modified programs.

Need for position qualifications and training requirements for LA teachers. ... and accurate job descriptions.

The university teacher training programs must be " modernized " to reflect the reality of the system ... special needs children ... inclusion ... reading and language needs ... dealing with very difficult social - emotional problems and behaviour problems ... in regular classrooms !

School Administrators should not carry an LA assignment ... this rarely works well to the benefit of the children.

Get rid of the IEP / massive paperwork requirements ... look at more appropriate ways to ensure accountability for good planning and service delivery.

Something must be done to ensure the proper level of resources to support appropriate assessments as well as planning in a radically changed special education model.

The Ministry should work with school districts and schools to bring about efficiencies such as bulk purchasing of expensive assessment materials and instruments, special needs equipment / technology etc.

Psycho - educational assessments are really being used for identification purposes to satisfy Ministry requirements / labelling for funding purpose ... rather than for diagnostic - prescriptive purposes.

Let teachers know how districts are being funded for special programs (the details) so they can be aware of the " games played ".

Must clarify IEP's ... what are they ? different protocols and templates ? solid criteria behind IEP requirement, etc.

There has to be appropriate physical space in schools to provide special programs like LA ... it should always remain a high priority.

Increase time, decrease ratio of teacher to number of students, more for early intervention, eliminating "slow" learners.

Increased LA time, space to work - some LA do not even have a desk or in some cases, a room to work in; some work areas are beside band or music areas; money for books.

LA time/staffing should be assigned on student need as opposed to being assigned according to just school population. Sharing resources between all support teachers (ESL, Resource Room, LA).

Higher ratio of teachers to kids, based on need of school (not by numbers).

Physical space to provide service and access to more resources (computers).

More specific definition of " who is a learning assistance student ", more time for consultation, more access to "special" programs - adolescent, day treatment, etc.

Increase staffing and properly allow for consultation/collaboration time in school,.

Recognition of ADD/ADHD and FAE/FAS (recognize other categories) and remove from LA "caseload", increase other support for behavioral problems - very

difficult kids that don't meet the Ministry definition for severe behaviour.

More technology, upgrading equipment, TA's, Lower caseloads, more teachers, clearer guidelines, better communication, time for IEP's, meet with teachers, SBT, Administrators with better understanding of kids and their special needs.

More money / more teachers. Emphasis should be directed to the primary school. It's easier to remediate at the primary level before behavior becomes problematic.

Should have as few " pull outs " as possible and emphasize support for the classroom teacher. Emphasis on the collaborative model, particularly at the Secondary level.

Pre-service education for teachers should emphasize the diversity of students in the classroom and the effective use of the collaborative approach.

Protection of funding for LA and Special Education is key.

Continuity and stability in service is important.

Need more inservice and education around inclusionary practice in the classroom - especially at the secondary level. Effective planning for transitions is still an area in need of improvement.

More money. It comes down to time - you can only pick up so much. The quality can't stay the same if you continue to cut back.

There are issues around TA's - some of the neediest children are being placed with TA's and not receiving the instruction they need. More time is needed to supervise the TA's. It's important to maintain a district infrastructure for support staff in schools.

Funding should be based on identified needs in the high incidence areas rather than a capped figure.

Idea of LAC teachers being excellent classroom teachers first ! Possibly LAC teachers returning to classroom every 5 years.

Co-teaching with colleagues rather than pull-out services.

Don't "velcro" special needs students to teaching assistants.

Increase funding, delete IEP's for LA. How can the ministry address LA students with a wide diversity of needs. Pay more attention to needs of primary students.

Targeted funding for students with IQ between 70 - 80; slow learner (not suggesting more testing!). Smaller class sizes. Resources for technology that "decreases" need for support by SLD students. Simplify IEP format, reduce requirements.

Structure regular "meting times" for the teacher and the TA to plan which do not impact upon the classroom teacher's time.

Transition and planning time for any staff involved is an absolute necessity to determine the best placement for the student so that the students feel supported and made a part of the school atmosphere from the very beginning.

Provide in-service for teachers working with TA's. Before a TA begins the job, there must be time given for the TA and the teacher to meet and discuss the strengths, routines, the roles and responsibilities that each one will have.

Provide in-service and training for TA's which is built into their working time.

Consider the prospect of assigning a TA to a teacher instead of blocks of time so that interruptions and the number of adults working with the class or with a student are minimized.

Ensure that there is funding available for all students who need support... so they are able to access whatever is recommended by the school based team.

Teachers, including Learning Assistants and non-enrolling teachers are continually trying to meet the challenges of IEP's, IP's, and mainstreaming. This includes the introduction of more adults into the learning day of students and consequent complications in the ways that teachers plan for their assigned students.

At a time when changes include many examples of downsizing, replacement of one set of qualifications with another and outright cuts to services, we must be careful that any changes we make are beneficial for all students and not just fulfilling the needs of political expediency or cost saving.

C. PROGRAM RESULTS

What are Learning Assistance teachers providing to students and classroom teachers that "works" (ie. positively affects student learning outcomes) ?

Direct and immediate feedback to students. Teaching in small " chunks ". Close monitoring.

Success builds self-esteem and confidence. Individualized attention - break work down in small chunks, providing alternate materials. Kids see they are not alone in having difficulty. The LA teacher is the advocate for students with difficulty.

Skill development (primary), small groups, classroom work in intermediate program, nurturing environment, LA knowledgeable about adapting and modifying programs.

Using small group instruction out of the regular classroom, providing extra resources for students within classroom, providing resources/materials to parents - educating parents re: reading.

Adapting in order to allow for success, positive attitudes.

IEP's, lower teacher stress, adapt to needs of teachers and students at school level.

Small group instruction, diagnostic assessment, modified/adaptive resources provided, supportive environment/safe for students, assistance in IEP development, support/input with classroom teacher during parent-teacher conference.

In class support - specific short term pullout - assessment on a regular basis - at home support. A more seamless model.

Direct service, tutoring support, drop in after school peer tutoring, modified/adapted materials /ideas, individual time, counselling for both students and teachers, communication and direct instruction, materials to parents, alternate testing

situations, SBT coordination, adjudication services.

Specific skills, modified materials, emotional support to the kids, individual time, identification of problems / academic; personal," second pair of eyes ", background information to teachers, review of files. strategies to facilitate optimum implementing modalities.

" When the LA teacher provides a complete program for a child in my class - that works".

" You can count on the LA to be in my class every day at the same time".

Provision of materials, advocacy on behalf of the students is an important role for the LA teacher. Meet as a SBT every week to share viewpoints. Modelling strategies for teachers is helpful. Grouping for instruction really works - this is a co teaching situation.

Alternate programs for individual or groups of students. Direct instruction, assessment services - confirms classroom teachers suspicions. Informal help provided as students require it.

Depends who LAC teacher is. Enables LAC students to access individual help. Classroom teacher has "sounding board" re students and their learning.

Demystify learning style for student, teaching goal setting and use of planner, consistent collaboration and consultation, teaching self-advocacy.

Mentorships. Program adaptation/modifications that meet student's specific needs - ie. scribing, computers, time consideration, exam adaptation, testing and interpretation, case-manage, liaison/family/teachers.

A safe, encouraging environment and " success " for students.

More immediate and individualized instruction.... learning strategies, alternate materials, adapted curriculum more suitable to learning need.

Assistance with test taking strategies is bringing about marked improvement on the part of LA students.

" Being a good listener to the classroom teacher and recognizing and acknowledging the difficulties ... providing some relief to the classroom teacher by taking the " regular class " while he/she works with some of the LA students (reverse approach) ... "

What evidence exists to support this perception ?

LA teachers use pre- and post testing - individual norm referenced tests. Anecdotal information coming back says that kids are helped in special programs. Kids happy to come to LA is an indication of success. Kids who self - refer is an indicator of success. Feedback from regular classroom teachers is positive.

Increased attendance / pre and post-test results / achievement test results demonstrating real progress.

Checklists / tracking forms / monitoring report cards / monitoring reading tests / graphing / discussion with classroom teachers.

Parent approval comments, students feel good about coming to LA centre, grades improve, teachers thankful, lower drop-out rate.

Pre-test/post-test - improved grades, positive attitudes of the student increased, growth in self confidence, students' self referral, support of colleagues.

Lower teacher stress, student attitudes, more students staying in school longer (accountability).

More students staying in school, Parental satisfaction, demands for more time, fewer students needing LA support at the intermediate levels (if early intervention programs are emphasized).

Improved academic work, assessments show growth, improved self esteem.

Increased referrals for support, materials, assessments/evaluation, consultation/collaboration, the amount of IEP's re adaptations/modifications, the number of children integrated into the classroom, teachers are aware of and incorporate alternate teaching strategies/mind set, increased need for service, parents are supportive and want/demand your support.

Improved academic achievement, reduced failure rates, higher retention, fewer drop outs, school completion, positive feedback from students, teachers, parents, more problems exist in school, more difficult population, positive perception of centre in school, kids self refer, highly utilized, waiting lists, re-testing higher scores, early primary kids discontinued.

Kids keep coming back - they bring other kids for help. Testing shows improvement. Feeling that there are fewer behavior problems where kids are helped and successful in LA.

With early intervention teaching program, there have been some real successes. There is often a dramatic change in self esteem. You know you're successful when strategies transfer across settings. Parents express strong satisfaction with the support their children receive.

Nice to get the Kramer moment " Oh . . . . " when it all falls into place. Kids see their own progress. They are happy to come to LA. " As a classroom teacher, doing some LA work, its nice to get the feedback from some students when they succeed".

Have been able to take a number of kids off the list. They improve in norm referenced individual tests. (Have developed a primary math and reading inventory). Parents are grateful for the assistance provided. They are supportive of the help students receive. The number of services that the District has and support services that come in to the district is amazing.

When service "works" it provides students with positive growth in academics and self-esteem.

Students being successful, teachers feeling empowered, students asking for help, and advocating for their needs, displaying self-esteem.

Teacher feedback, student success/self-esteem, parent feedback, teacher/student positive relationships over time/after they leave the school.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Report Supplement 1: Comments Summary

District Interviews / Superintendent and /or Special Programs Administrator

Summary of Responses

A. FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING ASSISTANCE

Does the school district have a specific policy related to the Learning Assistance Program and the delivery of Learning Assistance Services?

No specific policy.

Yes ... we have a comprehensive Special Programs Manual which contains policy and program guidelines for LA.

We have a district policy which is very general and which has not been updated since 1973.

Yes ... and we also rely on the Ministry Special Programs Book.

No ... there is no specific policy.

Yes we have a district special programs manual and it specifically mentions Learning Assistance Services ... not sure that we have a formal district policy

(Board Policy Book).

A District Handbook developed in 1990 - by a district composed committee.

Have a Student Support Services Policy - LA is referenced - copy attached.

Have a Handbook of Special Education Policies - it parallels the Ministry Guidelines.

No specific policy. Have a Special Education Handbook - includes LA description.

If there is no specific policy, how does the district provide direction to schools regarding the provision of Learning Assistance Services ?

It is a school- based decision - staffing is included in regular staffing. Meet LA's to go over Ministry Guidelines and provincial guidelines. Have a district LA Association, with monthly meetings. Regular updates given to administrators re: provincial policy, etc.

We issue a District Special Programs Manual to all schools.

We are just starting to do this and each school has a Ministry Special Programs Manual.

We provide direction by making sure we are in direct contact with schools regarding special programs and just recently we have arranged release time for LA teachers

and other special education teachers to develop a new Special Education Manual for the district.

The Special Programs Handbook sets out district directions.

LA Services are described in a handbook. The District Vice Principal of Support Services Supports LA teachers.

Are Learning Assistance Services distinct from other school-based special education services ? If so, how are they distinct ?

Yes, but moving to combined resource programs. Resource teachers act as case managers for low incidence kids.

LA teachers are also working with high incidence ... decisions are made through the School - Based Team. "Grey Area " kids also served in LA (those who are borderline or who are just below the standard deviation criteria).

This depends largely on individual school decisions ... they decide the service model and the nature of the services ... they decide how they will use their resources to meet the needs of students with special needs.

There is a " mixture " ... some schools have distinct LA programs while others combine their services in a resource model.

We are moving to the generic resource service model ... some of our schools are doing this and we want them to be the model for the other schools in the district.

We are finding differences of approach in our newly amalgamated school district ... some schools running one model while others are running the more traditional LA service model... it will be a challenge to bring this all together.

Yes ... in terms of access criteria / client population ... however there are some " grey areas " ... all LA services are school-based rather than itinerant and LA staff tend to be the " case management coordinators " for all special services in the school.

Very much so. The LAT is school-based and provides generic non categorical services at the school level. There are collective agreement provisions around LA services that temper the nature of the service / assignment of the LAT.

No.... we deliver an umbrella of services at the school level - each school had a student services coordinator and LA teachers. Now they have Student Services Resource Teacher at schools.

LA is distinct at this time but eventually services should be integrated. LA serves an important need.... serves as a major consultant service for teachers. LA teachers are classroom teachers first and special education teachers second. We have an inservice training program for LA teachers. LA teachers are an integral part of the system now.

Varies from school to school. The High School tends to separate services while elementary schools do not. It is a school based decision.

We operate a more generic service / resource teacher model ... but we do have Itinerant Staff for SLD / Severe Behaviour (Elementary) and District Counsellors (Secondary).

How does the district allocate resources to schools for Learning Assistance ?

Staffing is part of regular staffing - no expectations of minimum level of LA staffing. Have been working toward a core of assessment tools in each school.

District allocates staffing to schools on a formula basis which is in contract.

410 FTE grades 1 - 7 = 1.0 FTE LA Teacher

550 FTE grades 8-10 = 1.0 FTE LA Teacher

1000 FTE grades 11 - 12= 1.0 FTE LA Teacher

Base allocation-

K - 4 = 0.3 per 100

5 -12 = 0.45 to 100 (intended to capture LA)

In High Incidence and Low Incidence about 25 IEP's = 1.0 FTE.

We have a formula for LA which is determined once we know what the district budget will be ... LA funding goes to schools using this formula ... all other special education services are funded on a specific basis from the Board Office.

We allocate each school a " Block of Funds " to cover all special programs including LA.

We use an LA staffing formula with a minimum of . 5 FTE and a maximum of 2 . 0 FTE for schools.... it is based on school population but we do have some flexibility for meeting extraordinary needs through a " contingency fund ".

Pass funding on to the schools on a population basis - 100% of the LA funds go to the school. Works out to $ 132. 00 per student.

Money goes directly to the school on a per student basis ($158.00). Schools may decide to use it for teacher time, TA time, etc. Special Education money is also decentralized - rule is that the $ going to the school for Special Education must be used to provide special programs / services.

Are management decisions regarding Learning Assistance Services generally made at the district level or the school level ?

Entirely school-based (except for the initial budget allocation).

If the school has an allocation of 0.8 FTE or more then the school hires it's own LA teacher (through the district); if less than 0.8 FTE then Human Resources Department of the school district puts assignments together.

Both - staffing allocations central, staffing done jointly. School uses allocation to meet their needs.

The school makes all the decisions ... staffing... organization and structure of the program.

The schools make the decisions within very " loose " district parameters.

Primarily made at the school level ... but some input from district staff upon request.

Overall process and structure and meeting Ministry requirements are made by the District. Direction is provided by coordinator. Other decisions are site-based.

By and large at the school level - discussion of how the money is spent is reviewed by the district.

If decisions are made at the school level how are these decisions made and how does the district ensure accountability related to these decisions?

There are no accountability measures for decisions at the school. There is no program evaluation.

Expectations are set out and it is understood that schools will meet these expectations. Human Resources Department of the school district is also involved.

We hold regular meetings and also an annual retreat and every three years we conduct a comprehensive review of special education services in the district (copy provided).

There is no real system in place to check on accountability.

We run an internal audit process and as schools go through accreditation there is a further review of LA programs / services.

We rely on our School-Based Teams to monitor the service.

Decisions are made by school administration in conjunction with their staffs

(model / referral process, etc.).... the district does some informal monitoring through school visits and meetings.

LA staff are evaluated by District personnel rather than the principal - school cannot convert LA staffing to any other use.

Accounting is done through the District Office. This ensures that the allocations are spent in the LA area.

School - Based Team in each school - they make decisions as to how funding is used. Assistant Superintendent meets with principal and Special Education teacher to go over the budget. During regular school evaluations, special education is reviewed and checks are made on IEP's (every 2 years).

Does the district set out special qualification requirements for the assignment of LA teachers ? If so, what are these ?

No district requirement for qualifications, although postings would reflect Ministry Qualifications. No requirement to fulfill these qualifications.

The qualifications reflect the Ministry Guidelines - attached.

Yes - qualifications attached.

Yes, follow the Ministry Guidelines, however, availability is another question, so we have an intensive in-service program.

For new LA's we require a post- graduation diploma in Special Education.

Yes ... we set out qualifications but some collective agreement issues prevent us from implementing these qualifications.

Not at this time ... but this is definitely needed !

No ... we have no such qualifications criteria in place.

We are currently reviewing ... our current qualifications are rather " loose " in order to coincide with collective agreement rules.

Yes ... these are set out for all postings and all LA assignments.

B. PROGRAM EFFICACY

Are schools in the district following the IEP requirements set out by the Ministry ?

Yes - for the most part.

Yes, at elementary without fail.

Yes, it is a lot of work, the schools are doing a good job of this.

Yes .. generally... however we use " Learning Plans " instead for a lot of students ... these are " short version " IEP's / overviews.

For " designated students " yes ... but not sure about LA students.

Yes ... and we monitor this through our " internal audit process ".

Some schools are definitely not meeting the requirement ... some express difficulty in knowing what an IEP should be for LA students (as opposed to Low Incidence students where it seems very clear) ... also some difficulty in implementing the requirement in the secondary school context where students may have 5 - 7 teachers plus LA support or where the student may only be receiving some support for one or two courses.

Yes ... in about 70 % of the cases.

How does the district monitor IEP requirements ?

For Programs 1:19, 1:18 and 1:16 there are District Master Files for high incidence; files are in the schools and district expectations is that principals will monitor these.

We conduct " spot checks " and this is also monitored at School - Based Team Meetings.

We don't do this ... but we plan to implement a process through the school-based model.

Principals sign off a form ... for " designated students "... we expect them to ensure requirement is met for LA students as well.

Through our regular meetings with special education staff in the district.

For LA, it is not monitored in the sense that IEP's are filed centrally. Informally, it's noted that IEP's are there - Principals have the responsibility. District has offered inservice for the LA teachers.

We keep a special needs list at each school - updated 3 times a year. IEP's are sent in to the Student Services Department.

Done through Director of Special Services - the first line is the school Principal. The Principal sees every IEP and is often involved in the development of IEP's. The short form IEP is very useful for teachers.

Principal has the responsibility and it is monitored every 2 years by the Assistant Superintendent.

How does the district monitor the overall effectiveness of the Learning Assistance Program ?

No monitoring of the overall effectiveness of LA in the district.

There are no specific program evaluations in LA. It would be part of school accreditation. LA has traditionally not been seen as special education.

Every three years we do a complete review (curriculum; service delivery model; instructional setting; processes; adequacy of services)..... we use meetings and surveys and data collection from the schools.

It's the role of the District Vice Principal of Student Services.

It's of great debate at the moment. We look at what is the best use of time. For example, we're looking at Reading Recovery now. Because of the scope and complexity of the LA program, there is no neat way to monitor. However, feedback from clients and parents is positive. Our LA people have earned respect in the community.

District doesn't monitor this - the schools do - it's the responsibility of the principal.

What evidence exists in the school/district that illustrates/confirms student progress, parent satisfaction, or other measures of efficacy ?

Feedback from parents indicates they would like more help.

We don't really have any " hard evidence ".

We have " tracking results " related to student retention and student progress.

Some of our schools produce summative reports related to the progress of LA students.

The system isn't designed to get District feedback. The question should be asked at the school level and results given to the parent community in that school.

IEP update meetings give teachers a chance to voice their feelings of satisfaction. Achievement testing. Parent feedback - high satisfaction at elementary level.

The accreditation process in schools addresses this. This has been positive. "From a provincial perspective, we feel we're in touch, and doing a good job". Sometimes

it's easier to implement change in a smaller district. We're a district that knows all our staff and know how they're doing.

Without base line data, it's difficult to measure - need to look at individuals within the program.

We have the evidence that appears in our Comprehensive Report On Special Programs (conducted every three years).

C. CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

What positive changes have occurred in relation to the LA program over the last several years ?

The advent of School - Based Teams ... more coordination and support.

Services have become much more individualized.

Less " textbook oriented " (secondary) and the move away from the " pull - out " model / system and the move toward the resource model and classroom consultation and support in classrooms.

Planning has improved considerably ... as has progress reporting and parental involvement.

A significant improvement is the provision of inservice programs.

School Administrators are now much more knowledgeable about special education and are very supportive and they value the service.

More parents are aware of LA services and have become real advocates.

There is less stigma attached to LA and students are much more receptive to participating in the programs (secondary level).

The move to the " seamless service model " and the full service school concept.

LAT Association is a lot more active. There is more energy, more feeling of accountability with the Ministry IEP requirements. Overall level of knowledge is improving.

Teachers are better able to work on IEP's - LA teachers often chair and provide leadership on School - Based Teams. There has been a move at the school level to work collaboratively in relation to special education programs so that teachers and students receive the best service.

We have worked hard to develop policy, procedures, administration requirements.... worked hard at developing expertise. We are working to keep Special Education Assistant staff allotments. We have a real commitment to keeping Psychoeducational Assessments current. Referral services are now seamless.

Acceptance - public, parental, student acceptance. There's not a stigma. There is more flexibility in terms of service delivery. It's not just pull-out anymore. The service delivery is adjusted to what suits teachers and students. In terms of inservice, we've been able to move to in-depth approaches rather than just more skills and strategies - eg. a case study approach.

There is now a clear idea of what Learning Assistance with the ability to talk about it coherently.

What challenges have emerged ?

Implementing best practices overall is a challenge. Coordinating a program is difficult, especially when it is a site-based service. There are issues around the School - Based Team - how to organize it - making meetings more effective.

To get " indicators of success " in place.... accountability provisions.

Difficulty in getting regular classroom teachers to assume responsibility and " ownership " for all kids, including those with special needs.

Pressures (resource) related to the provision of programs for " designated students " are leading to a funding drain away from LA services ... LA is becoming displaced in many schools.

The " Teacher Assistant " dependence.

The model has " reversed " again ... classroom teachers want to send their kids to the LAT or to the LA Room.

Trying to provide opportunities for training and upgrading ... especially in a district with a declining population and collective agreement " bumping " provisions.

Trying to get regular classroom teachers in on the " partnership ".

The great divergence in students' abilities ... the numbers of special needs students are growing dramatically.... many students coming into the system with serious language and social deficits.

Resource challenges .... less money but more kids !

Administrative and paper requirements (especially to prepare for possible Ministry Audits).

The level of expertise now demanded of LA teachers ... in a wide array of special service areas ... this is increasing stress levels and causing " burn out ".

How to deal with those students who are " LA Lifers "... who have been in LA since the primary years ?

The " inclusion issue " and the impact it is having on LA... also trying to integrate / include kids who can't focus in regular classrooms because of distractions ... who need the " protective environment ".

Time challenges - the load of students. Keeping the balance between collaboration and direct service to students. The idea of the 'slow learner' who is doing well and often receives extra services needs to be examined. Need to acknowledge that these students are doing well and may not need LA services.

Service delivery methodology at the high school level needs work. Help regular classroom teachers to adapt and modify without such high levels of support.

There seems to be more kids - we're better at identifying. We're doing more work

with less - we have so many severe kids on the caseloads that there's not much time to service the mild-moderate kids. For special needs kids, the Ministry requirement for 1:1 correspondence with funding and programming is frustrating.

Definitions - what LA is and what LA isn't.

How might Learning Assistance Services be improved, given available resources ?

Have case manager / person responsible for special education programs in each school.

Must re-examine the resources allocated / available for proper assessment work ... there is a crisis looming.

Insist on " qualifications " for LA teachers ... get collective agreements out of the way.

Stop splitting up LA teachers' time and assignments.

Ensure once and for all a change to Teacher Training Programs ... to ensure appropriate entry skills and knowledge related to special education services.

Tackle the training / upgrading issue ... training for classroom teachers and LA teachers.

Get off the " IEP as a document kick " and instead focus on appropriate processes / methods ... and ways to demonstrate accountability.

Need to re - think the utilization of Teacher Assistants for service delivery ... is there a better way that will improve the quality of service to students ?

Greater degree of training for LA teachers - developing an inservice program for them. Skill development for LA teachers in their new consultative role. LA teachers need up-to-date information on new curriculum issues - very important for making adaptations to curriculum.

Provide the funding for LA and high incidence in one " block ". Then services could be provided in a continuum. At present, the line is drawn because of the separate Ministry Guidelines and the teacher contract. Policy should reflect a collaborative model more strongly. A Provincial emphasis on early intervention and early literacy is important.

LA may have lost it's focus - needs to regain this. Can't say we need more - issues are more in district.

Really have to move to a co - teaching, coaching kind of model where strategies can be implemented in the classroom. This district has made steps to implement this.

Continue to make University Course Work available and mandatory for the teacher education program. Maintaining funding is vital! It would help to improve funding.

Training is critical - qualified trained people are needed and this may need to be legislated.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Report Supplement 1: Comments Summary

Parent Meetings

Summary of Responses

A. INFORMATION AND ACCESS

How do parents find out about Learning Assistance Services for students in schools ?

Through the school when student was experiencing difficulty. Parents are made aware of the service when children experience difficulty. Some through pre-schools.

Parent - teacher interviews; Newspaper Ads.

We got a call from the Teacher Assistant.

Had to go to school to ask questions about programs ... had to " fight " to access the service ... had to make a special request of the Principal to conduct testing on my child.... we went to the teacher but it was a struggle... often have to ask what is available.

The teacher directed our child to the LA teacher who in turn contacted us to let us know about the special program.

The teacher and the principal wrote a letter. The teacher phoned. Parent contacted the school.

From our family Doctor.

Usually don't know about the service or the problem until it is too late .. the system doesn't encourage a comprehensive look at services available... no real information is given out.

Through teachers; parents initiate contact at school and obtain information from teachers/counsellors; recommendation from assessment at Children's Hospital (Vanc.); "From my Son - he said he was getting help"; through the Child Development Centre and Special Needs Pre School.

Teacher call or information sent from school. Parent requested service.

Child has to be failing - and you go to the school and fight for a program.

Do you as parents feel you have a good idea as to what the Learning Assistance Program is intended to accomplish for your child ?

Not sure - not always kept informed. I have tended to trust the system.

LA teachers should be bluntly honest with parents. There was no communication as to goals (5 years ago). There is no consistency with LA.

Yes ... through the IEP meetings and regular updates by phone and short meetings ... also drop in to school occasionally and get the chance for short conversation with the teacher.

No ... we have to initiate by telephoning the school.

The system/ program seem to shift from year to year . . . you have to study to find out.

Yes I have a very clear idea. Between the teacher and the LA teacher all my questions are answered.

Yes - constant communication - notes home 2-3 time a week. Report card. Homework program included in information to home.

Seems to be a wide range of program offerings from school to school (for kids with same difficulty). Some parents request information in order to be informed. There are some communication issues.

Yes - it's for remedial work, modifications/adaptations, strategies/ coping skills. "We suggested what was needed and they're doing it quite well".

I know about my child's program.

No - expectations are a " blurr ".... Not really - there is not a clear description. There should be an outline in the school newsletter about LA, so all parents know the program exists and what it's about.

From your perspective has it been relatively easy to access this service for your child ?

It's been offered - always there - except for the Middle School.

Because of the inconsistencies in LA, the parent has to be the child's advocate. The child's difficulties are often not communicated from one teacher to another - it's up to the parent to advocate and provide the same information year after year.

Yes - relatively easy. As a parent we have the choice to receive the service.

Satisfied, but fear there may be cuts. Access should be equal across the district....Parents need to be watchful in order to keep the program from year to year.

LA teachers do testing as well - direct service backup - should have consistency. Some kids don't get service as they're not severe enough.

No - have to know the system - who to contact - in some schools access was easy, in others it took longer.

Aide time sometimes gets put in the "class " - it's not student-specific.

Sometimes it's difficult to find out about the funding and what your child is entitled to.... "Squeaky wheel gets the grease".

Had to be the "squeaky wheel " - not easy as we had to be persistent.

Was provided right away. There are issues of internal communication problems in

the school (eg. year to year). Good transition planning between schools takes place.

There is an actual program in our school - sometimes students receive a service and parents don't know. School has a peer tutoring program.

It's tough to access the service . . . we have to initiate instead of the school initiating.

This differs from school to school and depends on the teacher . . . there is a lack of continuity and it often depends on the grade level . . . its is harder later on in the system (high school).

It seems to be an on- again - off- again service which is not easy to access.

No . . . we experienced a lot of trouble . . . for example, several cancelled meetings in relation to our child's assessment.

There are big differences from school to school . . . some schools don't have LA!

Early intervention is needed. . . it is frustrating especially at the primary level... A letter from our Doctor/pediatrician was very helpful in acquiring LA services.

Yes, the school staff have been extremely helpful and supportive.

B. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Are you provided the opportunity to participate in the planning of LA Services for your child ? If so, what is the nature of your involvement?

" I learned the hard way - by what didn't happen in the system". " Every year it's the same - it's ongoing".

" In high school, they are incredibly receptive".

As a parent you have to decide what's best - you have to advocate for your child. It's like dealing with medical personnel, you have to stay in there. You have to stay involved and be up front about it.

Yes - meetings with teachers to discuss needs and develop program.

No - school developed the program and it seems to work. Took a long time for District testing. Need to be persistent to obtain further assessment.

Yes - with the IEP.

Through the Homework Book, and teachers are receptive to parents' wishes, but this is more difficult at the High School level.

Have not been involved in planning. After a stay at Children's Hospital, everyone was involved in planning to implement the recommendations... but this doesn't happen now.

Yes - invited to participate in the planning - asked what goals are for the next 3 months - teachers indicate what they think - others invited in to the goal setting - unfortunately they are not followed through.

" My son was invited to the meeting and all we heard was what he could not do". . nothing about what he could do !

(Other parents expressed that they were unaware of IEP's..... what they were or whether one existed for their child).

Not much opportunity to participate.

Yes . . . I am helping the LA teacher with my child's program.

Does your child have an IEP ? Do you have a copy ? Are you involved in setting out the IEP and monitoring the IEP ?

Yes - have 2 copies.

(One parent not aware of any IEP).

"IEP didn't make a difference to the way teachers worked - it was only documentation ".

Don't typically have an IEP.

IEP's - all parents in one meeting indicate they have copies and were involved in developing the IEP. In some cases, the student was involved too.

Yes - have a copy of the IEP.

No - don't have a copy.

(Of those who have IEP's there is no involvement in monitoring).

Hear from teachers that they haven't had time to read the file - so parent has to be involved - parent has to initiate things or nothing is done. " I'm exhausted with always going to the school".

Yes and I have a copy. But I haven't had much involvement in setting out the IEP but I do keep informed.

Yes. . . but sometimes things don't get done that are listed in the IEP. . . we do get a copy of the IEP.

Are you consulted throughout your child's participation in the program ?

Yes - quite a bit of consultation - through report cards and telephone calls.

Parents are involved in reviews and monitoring.

Team meetings are sometimes difficult to arrange - it's a time issue.

Don't like the pull-out programming. There is little consultation regarding the program.

If we don't go in, nothing happens.

We usually have to ask . . . we have to initiate.

Yes. . . some are very receptive to our involvement.

Yes. . . but not very often. . . maybe twice a year . . . sometimes very little notice.

Yes . . . my thoughts and opinions are listened to and I in turn appreciate the feedback from the LA teacher.

We have to initiate . . . it seems to depend on the individual teacher.

How are you informed about your child's progress in the program ?

Through report cards and telephone calls.

Notes, report cards, telephone, communication book, IEP, classroom teacher provides excellent feedback.

Feedback is from LA. Difficult to get class teacher involved.

Report cards - I request follow-up. (Frustration with not knowing where children will be placed in the fall).

Information through report cards and parent teacher conferences. IEP reviews to a lesser extent. Teachers are accessible if you want more information - easier at elementary level.

Parent initiates the contact - it's not offered. We have to make the effort to find out what's going on.

There is too much space between report cards. Regular parent - teacher interviews don't give much information.

By the time you get interim reports and the report card it's too late - 6 weeks in to the term is too late - There needs to be almost weekly reporting for kids experiencing difficulty - could be informal basis - Some kids have a daily reporting method. Why doesn't this translate into follow up for the child ?.

Report cards, phone calls and interim reports.

Telephone contact, notes home.

In class interview and a written report.

Report cards, telephone calls and informal contacts.

Are you satisfied with the current progress reporting methods used by the school in relation to Learning Assistance Services ?

Satisfactory - adequate - get separate written reports from the LA teacher.

There needs to be "flat out honesty".

Yes.

Yes - (vast majority).

Not always (a few).

Communication is more direct at elementary.

Yes - we are in contact every day.

" It's constant surveillance on the part of the parent". " Sometimes I feel my chief role is to make sure my child has a positive outlook on education because it's taken away from him almost every day".

Yes . . . written reports are followed up with a telephone call and an interview. Concerns between reporting periods are always addressed either by phone or in person.

Would like to see a continuation of "The Communication Book" at the secondary school level. There is a need for better communication vehicles especially at the secondary school level.

C. PROGRAM RESULTS - SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE

From your perspective is the LA program successfully helping your child to progress ? How do you know this ?

Definitely - level of concentration has improved. She now has a lap-top computer and she is making good progress.

Lack of consistency from year to year is disturbing. We've not found a good LA teacher. There is so much inconsistency in methodology, so I became the Orton tutor.

Not in the elementary years - can't address a group of children's individual needs in a 15 minute block.

Progress - yes. Can see from the work done.... Enjoyment of school.... Self confidence/self esteem improvement.

Comments from teachers. Report cards. Home Communication Book, reading diary.

Yes - by report card marks.

By the way the student feels about himself. Not hesitant to go to the school.

LA gave my son a personal contact at the high school. Can now read what he writes.

No - not consistent - no strategies for organization or spelling. Not enough time in the program - not sure they always address the right thing. "Children need vocal parents." " Some LA's are more open than others".

LA teacher has made my son feel smart. Yes reading has improved. The help she has been getting has helped.

Should have more information so you can make decisions about your child.

We have witnessed the change/progress.

Yes, the LA program has definitely helped my child's progress. There is an improvement in self esteem and my child enjoys going to school now.

Yes ! Especially when the program is started early (eg. primary).

Are you asked to participate in the evaluation of the LA program ? If so, how do you participate ?

Not really.

To some degree.

No - not really.

Informally . . . there is a need for evaluation results to be communicated to parents.

No . . . and we should be part of doing this.

Yes . . . we compare notes . . . the LA always asks about progress at home and relates this to progress at school.

Can you offer any suggestions aimed at enhancing or improving the provision of Learning Assistance Services in schools ?

Accept that children learn differently and then teach them differently. Kids can't be clumped in an LA class and taught the same way.

Early intervention is critical for kids with learning difficulties.

Scientifically reliable research on methodology that works.

Qualifications for LA teachers - they need to have taken courses in special education - especially in learning disabilities.

Care needs to be taken with kids who show frustration at middle school years - these are kids who often have undiagnosed learning disabilities.

Provide the type of support the child needs.

Teach students how to advocate for themselves.

" Maybe we should have workshops for other kids on how some kids learn differently". Need more education for other kids.

" Fifteen minute periods of remediation 3 times a week just don't cut it".

Parent brochures on services and what to look for in terms of L.D. could be useful.

There should be more empathy with parents and students when students have learning disabilities.

Set up programs right at the start of the year.

Stop cutting, so parents don't have to fight year after year. Provide more services so that money doesn't need to be spent later.

Computers and technology should be more available.

There is a private system for LA - a two tiered system for those who can afford it (fighting is very tiring for parents).

Standards have been adjusted according to the budget (eg. the new definition for S.L.D.).

Enable kids to repeat grades.

Provision of tax dollars to private schools. Incorporate ideas from private sector into schools. Re-allocate capital costs to operating budget - to develop programs. Schools are depending on PAC's for technology.

More time, more money.

Early intervention. One to one for the first couple of years would save a lot of money later.

Ideal LA teacher would have 25 years experience. Need lots of experience and qualifications. Qualifications for TA's important too.

" My experience is that younger teachers are more willing to try different things" - more creative, not black and white. " Want a teacher to build up self-esteem of my child".

Early intervention is preventative.

Lower class size would help with behavior problems and learning problems.

Need more support for children with mild to moderate learning disabilities.

Need consistency between schools for programming.

Need more parent education on how they can help their children.

Need access to assessment services in the community rather than having to go to Vancouver.

Schools should work more closely with community agencies - eg. child development centres and special needs pre-schools.

Greater variety of programs would help.

Communication from one year to next by teachers would help.

Need to examine duplication of services.

Things like scribes or taped assignments should not depend on an individual teacher.

" Our son has been tutored (LA) for 2 years and it's because of this that he'll graduate". " LA gives students confidence".

More staff. The basic needs are not being met. There should be more staff in LA. The case loads of LA teachers seem to be very high.

Gov't should get priorities straight and fund the school system.

Everyone has to make a better effort at communication - it's two way.

Want to make sure there are no more cuts to what is here.

School system has lost focus. All teachers should have training in LA/Special Education. This would help with identification.

Grouping students for instruction would be efficient.

Use Pro- D days to inservice teachers on special education.

Make LA programs more exciting - vary the programming. Use technology.

Change the school year - use year- round schooling so the kids don't forget so much over the summer.

Provide more structure for students with learning disabilities. Fund LA on the basis of the number of kids receiving service, not on a formula basis.

Being able to choose your teachers. The district should let parents know what is available. Give kids the help they need and don't just push them through the system.

There has to be more money and there have to be better trained teachers. Teachers in special education or LA need a break in their careers. It can be very draining.

Teachers need to be accountable for what they are doing.

" I know I need to be at the school more - so there needs to be an open door policy at the school".

Parents need more support. They need to feel welcome when they walk down the hallway.

Need to follow-through with the IEP's. Need a reporting system to let parents know how their children are doing - my son was dropped in LA and I didn't know it for 4 weeks!

Several parents have enrolled in the 'Reading Foundation' - $ 3000.00 for a month.

Have a feeling that the school doesn't listen to parents... this needs to change.

Suggest that the school teach phonics. Schools need to recognize that kids have different learning styles - and teach to those learning styles. The things that don't cost money and aren't done are very frustrating eg. photocopying notes.

Could the school system do more testing?

Making all resources more accessible would help - eg. the Pathfinder Labs. Technology is an area that could help kids - more computer programs.

Parents should be allowed to go in to the school to help in the classroom.

There is a need for training for regular classroom teachers. Learning Assistance teachers must be trained and qualified.

There is a need for adequate and timely assessments.

There is a need for stability . . . whereas now there is a lack of structure and continuity to LA services.

Parents should be provided with advance information about special programs in the school and in the school district.

There is a need for greater standardization from school to school (especially re programs and IEP's).

Someone needs to deal with programs that seem to be a mess . . . where it takes too long to get assessed . . . where services are cumbersome, unwieldy and understaffed.

Funding needs to equate to the needs of the population . . . we need to get the kids the time!

Regular classroom teachers need training and time to deal with special needs students.

Funding allocations should be monitored.

There is a need for communication programs to (educate) parents as to the nature of the services.

There should be the sharing of successful models.

The schools need to listen more to parents and involve them in a partnership way.

There is a need to cut down on paper work and administrivia so teachers can teach.

Someone has to deal with policies/collective agreement provisions which are thwarting the service.

There is a need to look for incentives and ways to keep LA teachers in place.

There is a need to re-examine the model . . . there should be more special classes for LD kids without worrying about the push for inclusion.

There is a need for more support personnel in schools.

There is a need to look at some centralizing . . . to get quality rather than watered down school based services.

There should be more trained tutors/aides and more peer tutoring programs.

There is a need for greater continuity from teacher to teacher and grade to grade.

There is a need for secondary schools to address the stigma attached to students who participate in the LA program.

There is a need to provide better transition programs for LA students moving from elementary into secondary school.

Collective agreements . . . stop letting them rule the playing field!

Re-examine the neighborhood school fixation!

Identification of who is at risk for learning difficulties must be made. Classroom teachers must be aware of those students who may be at risk and be able to identify early signs of LD and seek the appropriate interventions. As parents we often hear and are eager to accept. " Don't worry. He will grow out of it." Often the damage to the student's self esteem as parents and teachers wait for him to "grow out of it" produces devastating results.

Psychometric testing must be available to identify problem areas.

Teachers must know what areas of LD they are dealing with and which strategies are necessary to be implemented in order to be effective. They must also know the student's areas of strength in order to effectively implement the strategies. At present there are waits of up to a year for psychometric testing to be done on children that desperately need it. Just as a Dr. should know what illness he is treating before he prescribes medication so should the LA teachers and parents know what learning problems they are addressing. - - Not reading at grade level may be the result of a certain combination of learning problems that needs specific attention.

Teachers and parents must be educated about learning disabilities and work together.

The strategies that the LA teacher uses and the appropriate level of work must be followed through with **all** the student's work in the regular classroom and at home in order to provide a consistent learning environment. All the learning assistance teacher's work can be undone by a classroom teacher or parent who doesn't understand the situation and follow through.

As parents we hear too often from regular classroom teachers, "I'm not trained nor do I have the time to deal with learning disabilities. your son is receiving LA. There is nothing I can do."

Very little instruction is given at university to regular classroom teachers regarding LD, yet every classroom will have at least 2 LD students.

When a parent has a child that is not learning, it becomes very easy to point the finger at the teachers and say, "You are not doing your job." If psychometric testing has been done then all parties can be better educated on the child's situation and facilitate a better learning environment by working together from a base of knowledge.

Learning Assistance teachers must have special training.

Learning assistance teachers must have the knowledge, experience and skills to be able to implement the therapeutic teaching techniques for individual students. SLD kids often do not "catch up" and can be extremely challenging kids to teach.

Quality service should be the major focus... and resources must be in place.

Due to cutbacks, LA time for needy students is extremely limited and is in a constant state of erosion. Those students with mild or moderate learning problems that could benefit from LA are shuffled down the list to accommodate those children with more severe problems. Many children never receive the help that would benefit them.

It would be wonderful if 20 minutes of remediation a couple of times a week would

help a severely learning disabled student. Unfortunately, many kids need more than what LA has to offer. To quote my youngest son "Learning assistance only got me out of the class for a break."

IEP's must be realistic.

The IEP "looks good on paper" but in reality is time consuming paperwork. Constant evaluation of the student's goals must be done if strategies are to work effectively. For all the areas of difficulty that some children have, you could probably fill a full time position with one person just writing and evaluating IEP's. There would also have to be someone who has the know-how, time and desire to implement them.

My two children are both severely learning disabled yet their needs are quite different. You cannot make the assumption that because one SLD student is successful with one form of support, that all SLD students should be successful with the same degree of intervention.

My eldest son received learning assistance with few positive results. After 2 years in a separate SLD class at the elementary level, he is now fully integrated at the junior high level with minimal support and has made the school honour roll each term this year.

My other son had to drop out of school in grade 4 because no matter how hard everyone tried nothing would work. He is now presently in a separate class for learning disabled children and is progressing well at his own pace. School will always be extremely challenging for him but he has been given back a sense of pride in himself so that he will be able to be a productive adult.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Report Supplement 2: Comments Summary

QUESTION 2 (L A SERVICE DIFFERENTIATION)

- Area Resource teacher deals with severely handicapped students. These students are in wheel chairs and have a T.A.
- L A Services are integrated with other services. We have a flexible and responsive approach which seems to work for our very transient population.
- Learning Assistance is sometimes combined with English As A Second Dialect as these areas are taught by the same teacher. Special education students are kept separate as they have a different teacher.
- We have a distinct SLD Resource Room.
- There are no boundaries in our service delivery. Student Services Resource Teachers work with all Learning Assistance, SLD, Mentally Disabled, Physically Disabled, etc.
- Can be average students with specific learning difficulties (gaps); can be ESL students (Intermediate II /Advanced) who have reading/writing problems; or students who score too low on psycho- educational assessment.
- Focus is on small group instruction as part of the learning curriculum.
- Our school has a Special Learning Resource Program plus a Grade 8 Transition Program.
- District policy has blurred the line between LA and Resource Room. They are all now called Support Staff (Student Support Services).
- Behavior Class takes 'designated students' in this category.
- This has become quite confused in the last few years since the district administration for Special Education changed to a "zone" service delivery model and changed our job descriptions to "student support teacher" (in place of LA Teacher, Resource. Room Teacher, S.S. Teacher).
- There is no ceiling on the numbers and there are differentiated strategies.
- Differentiated from Resource Program (identified students).
- Enrichment is offered via our school librarian and our zone Support Teacher handles individual, group and family counselling.
- Some students have S E A 's and District Resource staff to monitor their IEP's.
- L.A. Serves Senior Special Education as well as non-designated students. Also, Gifted fall under the L.A. umbrella.
- LAC students work in small groups; other services ... SEA,ADW, work 1 to 1.
- As distinct from, DRT - District Resource Teachers or SEA's. Not appointed from students services department. Assigned to school based on student population. Use parent volunteers, staff assistant.
- The Special Ed Team (consisting of Learning Assistance, Resource Room, Behavior Program Teacher) meet on a regular basis to discuss the most appropriate case manager for each student referred for special education support. Learning Assistance delivers support to a much larger and more generalized student population base than do Resource Room and Behavior Program teachers as the LA mandate is much broader.
- Average ability or above. Mild to moderate learning disabilities.
- LA is taking over more roles, eg. ESL as time is decreased in these areas; and we are not always qualified.
- As we're designated a neighborhood school - students with ministry numbers are on the caseload of the District Resource Teacher - School based.
- Generally service is provided in groups that average 4 to a group.

- Next year we hope to blend services more than was done this year.
- LAC teachers do include Identified Special Needs Students in learning groups if the child is identified as needing this instructional content. ESL students are included with LAC at all levels as we have had no ELC time.
- Students designated PEP, SLR, Alternate Education do not receive any LA support except when an LA teacher provides classroom support where the designated students are taking the course along with the regular students.
- Dependent on needs of student - some special education students have programs similar to LA students, some are far different.
- Due to the limited time available the principal has tried to maintain a minimum LA program - pull-out - as a compromise was necessary. It actually worked as the children loved to come to the principal's office. All low incidence children were supported by their teacher, a special student assistant and parents. All were involved in the IEP process.
- We work as a team with other services but each has their own mandate.
- Three programs within our school - LA serves general population, Alternate Program serves students 2-3 years behind grade level, Special Needs Program serves profound handicapped.
- Separate programs exist for identified learning disabled and low incidence TMH/EMH students through the Bases program.
- Less direct instruction time is provided, a less detailed IEP is completed, report card format is somewhat different than regular reports, (ie.) more support is provided for resource students.
- A speech pathologist and hearing and vision are done by other specialists on an "on call basis ".
- We have a District Special Class and a teacher for low incidence integrated students.
- Para professionals - Teacher Assistants, other agencies - eg. speech, occupational therapist.
- There is a great deal of overlap and sharing of resources.
- District support staff provide on-site service eg. speech/Lang. Pathologist, District Behav. Consultant and School Psychologist. School support workers assigned to school. Other community resources available at school level.
- On site - expected to work with all classes - responsible to assist all special needs, no matter what the category.
- We also have school support workers and a counsellor working with these students as well.
- However, Learning Resources (LA and SLD) is distinct from special needs students. LA and SLD were combined this year, but will change next year.
- Non categorical Resource Room program.
- We have 2.1 FTE Resource/LA teachers. They deal with L.I., H.I. and L.A. students and cover specific grade bands. The total time for these teachers is calculated with HI, LI and LA components of staffing.
- There is a special learning resource teacher for special education students.
- There are District Resource Teachers who have these students on their caseload - The LAC teacher sometimes work with these students if they 'fit' into an LAC group or are waiting for special help.
- We do not have a special education teacher... so designated Special education students receive priority for LA.
- LA - shorter term goals - IEP's may not be required - services are generally based on need.
- Part of overall student support services in the district .
- Learning Assistance Services are only able to be provided after all ministry Designated Special Education students have received service.

- LA is the short term academic boost for faltering students. LA screens and identifies learning disabilities. LA provides support for academic course loads. LA provides specific adapted programs of support.
- LA arranges support between inside programs and outside agencies. LA provides specific support during testing. LA researches student files for teachers, parents, and administration.
- We have included skills development, extended skills development centre, gifted, learning disabled, and district resource teacher students.
- We have different programs in place for PASS , 9 (students 2 years behind) and work experience.
- However, L.A.T. and Resource (Sp. Ed.) teachers share identified students by mutual agreement.
- Learning Assistance is intended for students in the regular program who are striving to attain the Dogwood Certificate. We have another program called the School Completion program for those students working towards attaining a School Leaving Certificate.
- We have a multi-grade classroom in our school and an inclusion teacher. Our Inclusion teacher and LA are the same person.
- Life skills program, school leaving program, pre-employment program, 2 yrs. school completion minimum essentials program, school completion certificate, senior alternate program, Gr 10 equivalency and transition to grad program. Tutorial services (encompasses LA services for all students registered in the school.
- Lifeskills program, minimum essentials.
- In our school we combine services of LA and special needs because both are done by me-part time LA and part time inclusion.
- Clear definition between students in designated funding categories and those students needing LA support.
- Some students from SLD, severe and moderate behaviour, gifted and speech/language receive some learning assistance.
- Generally less intensive service, but delivered as part of overall resource model.
- Yes, by the degree of integration into regular classes; by the background information provided to counsellors and teachers. We distinguish between special needs, life skills, and integrated learning assistance.
- Learning Assistance services are differentiated from Resource Room assistance that a special education student might receive. Generally, Resource Room assistance is more intense and has more specific entry requirements.
- SpecialResource Room Teacher deals with special need students with ministry numbers. ESL support teacher deals with ESL needs. Area counsellor and Youth Family worker deal with behaviour/emotional. learning needs.
- Learning Resources Services can be more flexible - as to times/child - 6 week blocks, 1-3times per week, as opposed to full year service for designated Special Eduçation students. (Learning Resources .92, SLD/Behavior I.4, Special Needs .2, Reading Intervention .1).
- LAC is provided to those students who do not have a DR number. DR students receive service from DRT school- based and SEA's.
- We do not have enough LA time for regular students as most of the time is directed to designated students. Low Incidence Students often require more assistant time than assigned to them. Increased demand of paperwork takes away actual time devoted to students. Often LA times are cancelled for IEP meetings.
- Learning Assistance is based on the learning needs of the student. Not all

special education students need Learning Assistance. The school-based team attempts to make sure special needs students get support in all the areas they require - ie. counselling, ESD, Integration Support Teacher, behaviour programs, outside agencies, etc.. The Learning Assistance teacher is part of the school-based team.

- Yes, some students are designated as " Special Learning Resource ". A separate or same person is hired for that particular student to provide support.
- There are more teacher referrals - with some screening - than for designated students.
- Designated students receive more time, more adaptations/modifications to instruction.
- First they are provided for students other than "designated special education students" based on teacher referral rather than ministry number. Designated special education students generally receive more support from other district staff.
- In-class support is provided for students to help with personal organization of assignments.
- There are additional Special Education programs that do not have Learning Assistance Support.
- Also School Counsellor, Resource Teacher (special needs), ESL.
- Severely Learning Disabled (SLD) and EMH students receive Resource Room staff allocation. Those learning disabled students who do not fit ministry criteria are serviced along with general school population in the LA program. Our school receives 7.5 hours/week for a student population of 138.
- LAT chairs school-based team and leads the development of IEP's (for grey area students).
- Speech and Language - referred through SBT. Learning Disabilities - after LAT assessment and referral.
- LAT chairs IEP's if student accepted for LDST designation (LDST teacher gives her tests - no direct service.
- Resource Room - Itinerant Resource Room teacher takes over Resource Room pupils after LAT assessment and assessment by the school psychologist. Also, Hearing, Vision, Behavior all referred through the LAT and SBT.
- All students needing extra educational support receive attention regardless of specialized designation and based on referral by teacher/family. Students who are identified by special education categories receive specific service based on diagnosis/IEP's through consultation with parents and teaching team (School Based Team).

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QUESTION 12 (OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO DESIGNATED FUNDING STUDENTS WHO ALSO RECEIVE LA SERVICES).

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

- Teacher Assistant; Counsellor; Mature Worker; Speech and Language; ESL Teacher; Psychometrician.
- Child Care Worker; First Nations T.A.
- Speech -Language Pathologist.
- Speech and Language Therapist.
- O/T; P/T; SLP; Family Support; Special Program Student Assistants.
- Teacher Assistant support.
- SLD teachers, IS teachers, (intensive support).
- SLD - Severe Learning Disability Resource Teacher; Integrated Low Incidence students with teacher assistance support.
- First Nations support workers; Speech and Language therapist.
- Itinerant teacher of the Hearing Impaired.
- Personal Attendant; Educational Assistant; Youth and Family Worker; Counselling; Physiotherapy and Occupational therapy; Speech and Language services co-ordinated by student services coordinator.
- None at this time, but previously giving assistance to student now placed in Social Development Program.
- District Resource Itinerant; SEA;parent helpers; staff assistant.
- District Resource Teacher; SEA support.
- Child Care Worker; Teaching Assistant; Counselling.
- Severe Behavior Teacher; counselling; Resource Teacher;
- Teacher of Severe Learning Disabled.
- High incidence students go through L.A. to get placement. When' deassessed' high incidence students are monitored by L.A.
- Counsellor; Child-Care Worker.
- Resource Program Support; Speech and Language; Aboriginal Support.
- Life skills; counseling; occupational therapy; physio therapy; speech therapy; community resources; behavior intervention plans.
- Funded students do not receive LA support, but do get services from G.E.L.D. / BASES and alternate programs.
- Integration support; community services; Rehabilitation Program; Child Care Worker support.
- In school counselling; regular help from teaching assistants; hearing impaired teacher; visually impaired teacher.
- SOLO (computer assisted individual program); Alternate Program - all day; special classes of 12 students; reading support blocks; transition 8 class.
- Students designated CELD basis or physically handicapped receive support from their respective programs. They would only receive LA support on the rare occasion their instructor requests it.
- SLP; student integration teacher.
- Support from District Resource Teacher- School Based and special education assistants.
- District Resource Teacher (case manager).
- Aide time - 3 days per week.

- Full time special education teacher; school counsellors; teaching assistants; peer tutors.
- Consultation from district resource teacher, and 3 children have SEA support in class.
- One student has 8 hrs. per week Teacher Assistant time.
- Resource Room; SEA support; counselling.
- Resource Aide; speech/language; counselling (school based); out of school counselling ; hearing impaired.
- Work experience; CC Worker support; peer tutor; modified curriculum; remedial programs.
- Personal Attendants; Resource Room; youth support worker; native home school coordinator; speech and language; occupational therapist; physio therapist.
- They do not receive LA services but rather they receive Resource Room service.
- Speech therapy; counselling; vision and hearing on an "as needed basis"; resources from SET B.C.
- Counselling; youth and family counselling; Dallas Society.
- Teacher assistants; childcare worker; Resource Room.
- Speech therapy; occupational therapist; audiologist; physio therapist; school counsellor; paraprofessionals; district student assessment service; remediation/consultant.
- Mild to moderate for Special Learning Resource Class.
- Social Services; Ministry of Justice; speech and language; physiotherapy; occupational therapist.
- Occupational therapy; speech and language; district assessment; Psycho-educational testing; assessment program (6 weeks).
- Speech/language therapy; counselling.
- Other special services include: Speech/Language; counselling; Occupational/Physical Therapy; Social Services; School Nurse; Pediatrician; M.C.F.
- Learning Centre; District Services - PT/OT - Speech Pathology; District Assessment Services; counsellng; T.A. support.
- Resource teacher; SLD consultant; severe behavior consultant.
- School support workers; counselling; Native TA; school-wide Aide - behavior students.
- District resource teacher - 1 1/2 hrs. per week. Teaching and Evaluation Centre - consultation and/or placement.
- First Nations support; severe behaviour support; special needs resource teachers (low incidence support).
- Youth care worker; grade counsellors; outside agencies -Mental Health, Social Services.
- School behaviour/self-esteem; OT/PT; individual SETA'S (special education teaching assistants).
- Educational Assistant time; SET B.C. resources.
- Special Education Workers; Resource Teachers; Speech and Language Support; I.C.M.'s; Mental Health; Hearing Impaired; District Psychologist; Native Education Support; Skill- Teaming for A.D/H.D students.
- District Resource Teacher - Behaviour.
- Teacher Aide time; private tutors (outside school time).
- Teaching and evaluation centre; Hearing Impaired Teacher; District Resource Teacher.
- Child Care Counsellor; First Nations Counsellor.
- In school SEA (is CCW). District itinerants: ESL; speech and language;

OT/PT Consultation; District Behaviour Team; Diagnostic Teaching; and Hearing and Vision teachers.

- Speech and language; First Nations Special Education Support; OT/PT; counselling.
- None except some Youth Care Worker support for moderate and severe behaviour and Special Education Assistant support in the classroom.
- Alternate program worker; Special Education Assistant.
- Pass Program Support; work experience; Resource Room.
- Speech and Language; Resource Room; TA support; First Nations.
- Integration support teacher (itinerant from district).
- Native support worker; Speech and Language Pathologists; counsellor; T.A. / Personal Care Attendants; Teacher for Hearing Impaired; PT/OT; Learning Assistance Resource Teacher (Itinerant).
- Itinerant Services - Teacher for the Hearing Impaired; Speech and Language; Special Education Resource Teacher; Technology; Physiotherapist/ Occupational Therapist.
- Itinerant teachers - teacher for the Hearing Impaired; Native support worker; speech therapy; minimum essentials teachers.
- Itinerants involved are speech/language pathologists; physiotherapist; hearing impaired teacher; and school counsellor as well as Native support worker; and LA Resources teacher for materials.
- Child Care Worker; counsellor; speech/language; First Nations/FAE support workers; family support workers.
- Speech and language; physiotherapist; behavioral classes.
- School is on a quarter system, some courses are 5 weeks in length, study skills (integrates gifted and LA centre) operates in 5 week blocks.
- Speech and Language; Teacher Assistant; Occupational Therapy; Child Care Worker; Resource Room.
- In class Teacher Assistant support; itinerant special needs teacher support; speech/language therapy; consultation /collaboration between teacher and LR teacher, SLD teacher, etc.
- T.A. ; O.T. ; First Nations; Speech and Language; Counselling; Out of School Agencies - ie. Mental Health.
- ESL; Teacher Assistant time; Resource Room Time; O.T./ P.T.; Counselling; Speech/Language - depending on student.
- Counselling; speech pathologist; English as a Second Dialect - ESD.
- Social Worker; Occupational Therapist; Psychologist; T.A. Time - 2 hours/day; Speech Language Pathologist.
- Speech and Language; Hearing Impaired; Counselling.
- OT/PT; Counselling; Hearing Impaired Teacher; Speech and Language Teacher.
- Success Maker Program; Prep. Tutors; Counselling; Special Student Assistants.
- Pediatrician; Sexual Abuse Counselling.
- Support of a Teacher's Assistant in the classroom.
- None - teachers receive support.
- District Resource Teacher; Youth and Family Worker; Peer Counsellors; Special Education Assistant.
- Severe Learning Disabilities Team; Behaviour Intervention; First Nations Student Advocate and /or Assistant; Counsellor; Hearing Impaired Resources; Speech and Language Pathologist; Visually Impaired Resources.
- Itinerant Child Care support; First Nations support worker.
- CEA's - Certified Educational Assistants - some support for 3 high-incidence mildly handicapped students grouped together. Speech/ Language once a

week. Resource Support - Resource Teacher - School counsellor once a week.

- School Support Workers; Parents; District Support Staff; Clerical;
- Community Services - Family Resource; Medical personnel; Social Workers.

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QUESTION 19 (COMMUNICATING ONGOING PROGRESS OF LEARNING ASSISTANCE STUDENTS).

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

TO STUDENTS:

- Verbally and through written assignment comments.
- Report Cards and IEP.
- Verbally, written reports, awards (stickers, etc.)
- Daily informal reporting; report card.
- Verbally, tests, student conferences, product evaluation.
- Results of work, tests, report cards.
- Discussions.
- Charts, graphs.
- Daily conversations.
- Verbally, criterion - referenced daily work, report cards (Sp. Ed.).
- Discussion, show assignment results,IEP meetings.
- Daily discussion in lesson.
- Verbal, ongoing evaluation/prizes.
- Orally, right after assessment. Comparison of written work from term to term.
- Daily verbal reinforcement, graphs & charts of progress.
- Day to day as needed or requested.
- Marking, notes on paper, verbal feedback.
- Oral communication, assignment results, assessment reports.
- 'Round Robins', Teacher marks, T.A. evaluations.
- Progress through graphs, charts, book levels.
- Daily, verbally, sharing files and assessment.
- By reviewing "Individual Student Learning Plan" with the student.
- Progress is communicated as students come for help.
- Informal and formal reports.
- Individual conference and feedback each period.
- Orally day to day, reports.
- On-going feedback, testing, retesting.
- Verbally - daily or weekly.
- Informal chats in class, report card comments.
- Formally -after each interim and reporting period (7 times a year).
- Verbally, portfolios.
- Verbally and through written reports.
- Daily on their progress logs, report cards.
- Verbally, charts, monitoring improvement, goal setting, rewards.
- Verbal, LA - IEP reviews.
- On a daily basis, monitoring.
- Verbal feedback, report cards.
- Daily through student records and scores for work.
- Immediate feedback.
- Charts, graphs, verbally, notes.
- Personal communications, reports.
- Conferencing, report cards, interim reports.

- Verbally, reports, sometimes involved at SBT meetings or meeting notes are discussed with student.
- Verbally, and report card.
- Verbally, and sometimes written test results.
- Individual talks, reports, conferences, goal setting.
- Orally, report card comments, test results.
- To student, encouragement, conversation, stickers/rewards,selfcheck on work, test results.
- Daily comments, discussion of quizz and test results.
- Comments, marking immediately, stickers/rewards, % scores.
- Informal/ongoing feedback - test results.
- Verbal feedback re: daily work.
- Report card, resource room rating system/rating scales.
- Informal, ongoing, report cards, testing results.
- Daily - verbally, test reports, quizzes written.
- Orally/interim reports/formal report cards.
- Conversation, verbal self-evaluation, IEP meeting.
- Informally/orally during or after assessment.
- Verbal, informal tests, progress on class tests.
- Informal conference, study folders, charting, reporting.
- Verbally, markers, Success Maker progress reports, Self-Evaluation, Feedback, Taped Read.
- Verbally, graphing, written- notes-marking.
- One-on-one discussion and celebrations.
- Daily communication in L.A. Centre.
- On assignment by assignment basis and written reports.
- Written reports, informal feedback.
- Positive feedback and daily assignments.
- Oral discussion/checklists/reports.
- Verbally, checklist - weekly, amount of work accomplished.
- Directly - and via self evaluation.
- Rewards.
- Report card, student/teacher conference.
- Self assessments, charts, graphs, verbal and written comments.
- At regular report card conference.
- Report card.
- Verbally, IEP reviews.
- Positive reinforcement, encouragement, graphing, discussions.
- Ongoing feedback.
- Informally throughout classes, by written report and orally.
- Verbally during lessons and notes on assignments.
- Communicated through on going review and assessment.
- Orally, informal and formal reports.
- Progress reports.
- Marked exercises, praise, tests.
- Individual conferences.
- Verbally, tracking sheets, report cards, IEP updates.
- Orally, graphs, reports.

TO PARENTS :

- Verbally and through written assignment comments.
- Report cards and IEP.
- Verbally, written reports, conferences.

- Report cards - invited to biweekly/monthly meetings, year end review letter/meeting.
- Verbally and in writing.
- Notes, formal reports, phone, meetings.
- Report inserts.
- Term report cards/phone/Interviews-IEP reviews.
- Written reports.
- Report enclosed and sent home.
- Report cards, telephone calls.
- Verbally, Report Cards (Spec. Ed. Suppl.), IEP meetings.
- IEP meetings, reports, telephone.
- Term reports, IEP meetings.
- Informal meetings, formal meetings, telephone.
- Term reports.
- Formal and informal reports, phone calls.
- When parents request information.
- Verbal, interim reports, reporting.
- Conferences, phone calls, report card comments.
- Letters, reports and oral communication.
- Report cards.
- Report cards, informal conversations.
- Phone calls, IEP meetings, back up notes, by teacher in planner, by parent in box in office; by LA Teacher with happy face awards and contracts.
- If students have been supported for long periods of time then anecdotal reports are written.
- Reports, team meetings, phone calls.
- Phone calls, reports, meetings.
- Reports, parent - teacher conferences, informal contact.
- Memos in students work, notes home, calls home.
- Interim and term report cards, phone call when appropriate.
- Report cards - written comments are sent home twice a semester, phone calls, IEP's.
- Letters, telephone, reports, verbally.
- Verbal, LA - IEP, reports.
- Anecdotal comments, report cards/phone calls.
- By report card, consultation, telephone
- Letters, report cards.
- Report cards, assessment results.
- Personal communication, reports.
- IEP's, conferencing, report cards, interim reports.
- Verbally, reports, school based team meetings.
- Formal report and progress reports.
- Informal meetings, reports, interim reports, conferences.
- Phone calls, letters, report cards.
- Phone, interviews and LA report card, Parent/teacher/LA meeting.
- Telephone or personal interview, report cards.
- Report cards, 3 times per year, notes in student planners, daily desk top sheets (goals, happy face, stamp count, reward).
- Telephone calls, meetings, work sent home, report cards.
- Telephone, letters, written reports.
- Phone calls, report cards, parent - teacher interviews.
- Reporting periods, teacher-parent -LA meetings, IEP's- reviews/updates.
- Report cards, letters home, conferences.
- Conversations, IEP meetings, copies of IEP.

- Phone calls, IEP/SBT meetings, report cards.
- SBTM / Reports - Notes.
- IEP review meetings, conferences, telephone.
- Regular reports, phone calls, notes home, conferences.
- Phone calls, written reports, regular reporting.
- Written reports/telephone conversations.
- Formal anecdotal reports, phone calls.
- Verbal reports, telephone calls, 3 reports/yr. and phone calls for concerns.
- Work sent home.
- Phone calls.
- Phone or letter.
- Verbal feedback, notes home, reports, conferences.
- Interviews, phone calls, letters, reports.
- Progress reports, agenda.
- LA teacher attends teacher/parent interviews.
- Written reports each term, IEP updates.
- Telephone calls, School-Based Team Meetings, formal reports and IEP.

TO TEACHERS :

- SBT meetings, IEP meetings, written reports.
- Report cards and IEP.
- Written, verbally, conferences.
- Bi-weekly/monthly meetings.
- Verbally.
- Verbally, formal reports, meetings, notes.
- Verbal interaction and summaries of testing (Woodcock Johnson).
- Discussion, Report Cards, IEP meetings.
- Conference.
- Informal meetings.
- Verbally, criterion - referenced daily work, adapted curriculum reports, report cards (Sp. Ed.).
- IEP meetings, reports.
- Term reports and discussions.
- Informal and formal meetings.
- Formal assessment report following assessment. Impromptu, informal meetings.
- Notes, verbal communications.
- Checklist of strengths/weaknesses.
- Conferences, daily/weekly discussions.
- Reports, memo's, oral communication, report comments.
- Frequent short meetings, collaborative sharing meetings,
- By progress report, by direct discussion.
- As you are able to catch them and talk with them.
- Reports, meetings.
- In person.
- Informal contact, SBT.
- Report cards, assessment reports.
- Informal chats, School Based Team.
- Verbally, informally, or at IEP meetings.
- Oral communication, written reports.
- E-mail, personally, student letters.
- Verbally, charts, graphs, "Update Team Meetings ".
- Verbal, LA - IEP, summaries.

- Informally - verbal, review sheets - written.
- Verbal feedback, report cards.
- Consultation.
- Regular notes to teachers.
- Consultation, report cards.
- Personal communication, reports.
- Conferencing, memos, paraprofessionals.
- Verbally, reports, school based team meetings.
- Verbal comments; reports to parents given to Regular Classroom Teacher first.
- School meetings, reports.
- Meetings - formal/informal, written assessments and reports.
- Written summary of test results, verbally in meetings.
- At recess, at lunch, give scores on paper.
- IEP meetings/progress reports/informal meetings.
- Verbal feedback re: daily work/meetings/SBT meetings.
- Informally, report cards, results from testing.
- Verbally, written reports, check lists.
- 'Round Robins'/oral discussions.
- Ongoing and informal collaborative conferencing.
- Teacher orientation meetings, direct contact, SBT.
- Conversation, IEP meetings, copies of IEP.
- Informally during consultation.
- IEP/SBT meetings, informal meetings, written notes.
- Conferences, SBTM, term reports contacts, central files, informal discussion, notes.
- Reports, assessments, verbal, meetings - informal and formal, SBTM.
- Consultation/weekly/term.
- Report cards, IEP's - conferences-School Based Team Meetings.
- Regular consultation, written reports.
- Verbal contact,written notes.
- Teacher / LA teacher meetings.
- Verbally - daily/weekly.
- Meetings - generally on-going - weekly -as often as necessary.
- Copies of report notes from conferences and phone calls, conferences, assessment reports.
- Discussion.
- Reporting, conferences.
- LA teacher with colleagues.
- Verbal/conference/SB Team/ notes/reports.
- Ongoing review of status/conferences.
- Consultation, progress report.
- Team meetings.
- SBTM/informal verbal/checklists/IEP updates.
- Regular meetings, brief informal conversations.
- Discussions, meetings.

TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION :

- Report cards and IEP.
- Written, verbal.
- School Based Team weekly meeting.
- Verbally, informal reports, meetings, notes.
- Discussions, report cards.

- Written and/or verbal reports.
- Copies of reports / letters sent to parents.
- School Based Team.
- Verbally, report cards, IEP meetings.
- IEP meetings.
- Term reports and discussions.
- As needed.
- S.B.T. meetings, verbal communications, sending student to show their work to principal.
- Verbally and via written reports, 3 per year.
- Oral communication, students exiting the program.
- SBT, short meetings.
- Meetings and written information.
- SBT meetings, through counsellors.
- Informal, SBT, reports.
- Frequent conversations, written notes, copies of assessment results when appropriate.
- Informal chats, School Based Team.
- Report cards and interim reports, School Based Team Meetings.
- Through School Based Team.
- Verbally, charts, graphs, "Update Team Meetings " (SBT).
- Verbal, LA - IEP, meetings, share up-dates.
- Via SBT, copies of letters sent.
- Verbal feedback, report cards.
- Report cards, consultation.
- Regular meetings with administration.
- Consultation, report cards.
- Personal communication, reports.
- Bi-monthly meetings, team meetings, conferencing, memos, copies
- of minutes - reports.
- Verbally, reports, school based team.
- Verbally.
- Reads parent report insert.
- Conferences, reports, informal meetings.
- SBT, report cards.
- Discussion, report card, assessments, meetings and copy of parent information report.
- Written and verbal comments, SBT meeting, report cards.
- It has not been other than the administrator reads report cards 3 times per year.
- SBT meetings/ progress reports / informal updates.
- Verbal feedback/meetings/report cards.
- Consultation.
- Charts.
- School screening meetings/oral discussions.
- When necessary, every reporting period.
- Teacher Orientation Meetings, SBT - direct contact.
- Conversation, IEP meetings, copies of IEP.
- Copies of IEP / SBT notes, reports.
- SBTM, informal or scheduled sessions.
- Verbally, reports, SBTM, notes, data summaries of individual/class assessments.
- Weekly consultation.
- School Based Team Meetings - minutes, consultation.

- Regular consultation, School Based Team.
- School Based Team.
- Written reports.
- Consultation, written reports, informal reports, school-based team.
- At School Based Team, verbally - daily/weekly, reports.
- Report cards and SBT meetings.
- Informal contact.
- Copies of report notes from conferences and phone calls, assessment reports.
- Orally, report card comments.
- Informal weekly discussions.
- IEP meetings, SBT, informally.
- Resource meeting on file.
- Consultation, progress reports, overview.
- Orally, written reports are signed by A.O.
- Consultation - reviews, reports/attends school based team meetings. Consultation time is built into the school schedule - 1/2 day (twice a month) regular classroom teacher is released.
- Caseload list, IEP's, verbal sharing of information, reports each term, SBT meeting notes.
- Report cards, daily exchange (informal).
- Monthly written reports/Staff Council meetings; IEP's/ daily informal exchanges/adjudication applications/accreditation activities/SBT meetings.
- Written reports, oral reports, IEP, school based team meetings.

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QUESTION 22 (VARIATION IN RECORD KEEPING PRACTICES)

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

- Long term, more ' depth ' reporting.
- Short and long form IEP's - IEP's updated more frequently for some students; depends on teacher involvement in program.
- Specially designed 'Intervention Plans' are measured and graphed. Group remedial instruction has anecdotal reports and periodic testing results.
- It depends on need, some have no documentation in writing.
- The more that is needed, the more that is used.
- IEP's for students over 25 hours or longer.
- Short-term students do not receive reports from LA teacher.
- Increases with severity of disability particularly behavior disabilities.
- In part - is response to needs of teachers/students and families.
- Transient students need more involvement and frequent write-ups for files so that receiving school can continue educational program and assistance.
- IEP's for some, not for others. Charting and graphing to motivate some students.
- If less than 16 hours (ie. 6 weeks in LA) no IEP, formal testing.
- Just more data recorded.
- It is very difficult to keep record keeping up to date on all L.A. students due to time constraints. It generally happens that the more severe and complex the learning problem, the more records are kept, calls recorded, test scores entered into the student's file etc..
- Differentiate between I.E.P. and Learning Plan/Program.
- Classroom support-record keeping is handled by classroom teacher.
- Some students' progress is noted daily, others less frequently. Those receiving most time generally are kept track of most fully.
- More ' depth ' IEP's required for students with learning disabilities or unique problems (visual, OT, auditory, language, behavior).
- An ongoing student has a more intensive file, working file, daily log record.
- Reading Recovery documentation is done on daily basis others are updated monthly.
- If short term help just a note in LAC file or SBT minutes. If more than 15 hrs. per year... page 1 and goal sheet of provincial IEP combined as IEP and report card.
- Files are not opened for students who "drop-in" for test- prep packages or occasional noon hour/ before school help with homework assignments.
- Recording practices vary in type/intensity based on short or long term assistance student is signed up for.
- If the students are in regular need of learning assistance, then more in depth records of work completed are kept.
- More reports on those with greater needs.
- More participation - more samples of work; more detail collected.
- If support in LAC is to complete classwork (assignments) then no special report or IEP is done. If support is less than 25 hours - no special report or IEP is done.
- Some students are filed in a group instruction learning file.
- Depending on amount of time spent on each child.

- Students with adaptations (eg. easier tests/exams, calculator in grade 8) have a more detailed IEP than students who only require an LA block for support.
- Depends on amount of support received.
- Students who are worked with in class only receive comments on regular report card. Reports are done collaboratively with the classroom teacher.
- Short-term clients work on mastery of specific skill and require less documentation than a student's complete Lang. Arts program, etc.
- Depending on student need.... Brief notes to indepth documentation.
- Length and intensity of IEP, anecdotal comments on report card.
- Depends on amount of service provided in hours and specific difficulties of student.
- More students, less time, funded students have more formal "paper work".
- If a student is not a pull-out student, a special report card insert is not completed.
- More detailed for the children with greater problems and more detailed for the older age group.
- Some students require more intense documentation.
- Some students require longer time (eg. when they are a couple of years behind in reading), some come for a short term (eg. learn times tables, practice help with printing or writing).
- Regular visit students - records are kept in notebook format rather than LA Admittance Form.
- Depends of the requirements of the student/parent/teacher/admin. officer/ministry/LA teacher as to the extent of detail included.
- If assessed only, those tools are record. Samples, work lists, reading, running records etc. are records of progress.
- Less detail on students seen only briefly eg. for assessment and consultation; or if seen in a class group.
- Record keeping practices vary according to student needs, time available, size of group in session and goals of the support program.
- In length.
- Student's receiving more La or Reading Recovery time have more extensive reporting.
- Varies in intensity depending on program - from letter grades to satisfactory work completion.
- Students who attend more hours/wk have more detailed records.
- Some students do not require an IEP. More intense involvement with more severe children.
- For one student, a behaviour journal is kept.
- If in small group (clinic) or individual, short or long term: in mini-clinic or not. More IEP's . . . more frequent assessment.
- There is more record keeping required for 'ministry numbered' students.
- Length of service determines IEP and consistency of program.
- If LAT is consulting only , then anecdotal comments are not kept.
- Consultative/in-class support less intense than direct instruction.
- Older students working on classroom assignments/ study skills may have no record keeping except as recorded at a SBT meeting or IEP review. Younger students learning alphabet, sight words, beginning writing have more work samples, informal assessments.
- Use appropriate notation and conferencing as need arises - may be informal or in-depth.
- Where extensive modification of regular program has occurred, LAT writes that portion of the report. IEP is written for every student.
- Action plans vs. IEP, notes for files, some are simply report card comment.

- Amount of detail depends on concentration (subject area).
- We use different formats for class IEP vs. District IEP - long term vs. short term home/school programs.
- Thorough and precise records kept for all LAC students.
- More intense participation - more detailed record-keeping.
- SLD's included in Learning Resources - more in-depth IEP - support blocks - if programmed regularly, more detailed record keeping on file.
- Depends on purpose and time.
- More comprehensive reports for long term LA students.
- LA students are less intense, so they require less detailed record keeping and maintenance than other categories.
- Monitor on - task behaviour by certain students.
- Number of different programs, work sent home, speed of student work.
- Checklists, quizzes and if there is extra assistance given to student by volunteer or Aide.
- Vary according to goals set for student.
- Students on IEP's are recorded more in writing, LA student plans are more informal and short term.
- Varies according to assessment category.
- IEP for some students, daily log for all students, achievement testing for some students.
- Depth and length of IEP.
- The more severe the disability the more records kept.
- Direct pull- out instruction - individual progress report from LA. In class support/support blocks - classroom reports on progress.
- If significant adaptations made - IEP is developed.
- Depends on degree of integration eg. student receiving assistance with subject but who uses study skills block as a subject might have only the regular subject teacher report.
- Some require formal District Forms ie. District Special Education Summary Form - IEP's require more formal assessment, evaluation and planning.
- Some are limited and short. Others are longer , involved with other agencies and ongoing problems - eg. behavioral or medical.
- Some areas are more conducive to checklists, some to anecdotal records, etc.
- If there is a greater degree of special needs required, especially if services beyond the realm of the school are required . . . then a greater degree of record keeping is required.
- More notes in logs, more frequent spot checks.
- Some students have their own IEP's for their own programs; others have anecdotal comments.
- Pull - out support or in - class support. Small group or individual support.
- There will be fewer assessment records and less detailed IEP's written for the less severe students.
- Depending on how often a student is seen. If they are seen on a minimal basis volume of record keeping isn't as great as they have less severe needs. More severe students are seen more often - greater volume.
- Need of instructional support - breadth of identified needs. Frequency of contact in semester. Degree of one-to-one intensive or specialized contact.
- Fewer assessment records and less detailed recording for less severe students.

Review of Learning Assistance Services
Report (1997)
Report Supplement 2: Comments Summary

QUESTION 23 (AFFECT OF IEP REQUIREMENT)

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

ON WORKLOAD OF LA TEACHERS

- Increased workload.
- Increased workload at beginning of school year.
- More paper work requires extra time which results in less time to work with students.
- No problem.
- We ignore this requirement.
- A major task which requires time from direct instruction.
- Increased time spent on administration, loss of time on direct instruction.
- Less teaching time, over-extended the first weeks of each semester.
- Increased workload, good consultation for determining specific goals for student between classroom teacher, parent and Sp. Ed. teacher.
- If we are assuming the "25 hours or more" is per year then: IEP's become part of instruction/assessment process and impact on teaching time.
- It takes away from student time. It requires a lot of time- paperwork and meetings.
- Increased writing (IEP's) taking away from planning time - puts me on "stressed" workload.
- Paper work - less energy for lesson planning.
- Impossible to meet this requirement without severely affecting service to students. We do group IEP's at times. (Our administrator is very supportive of a collaboration model). If you continue with the 25 hour rule, administrators should be mandated to allow IEP meeting time allotments during school hours (Some but not all can be done out of school time). Administrators must take classes or allow creative ways to free teachers during school time or Teachers On Call could be available.
- We have opted for using modified IEP's for some students.
- No noticeable increase.
- Impossible to write IEP's on all students receiving 25+ hours of L.A. in addition to writing IEP's for designated Spec. Ed students. What about Gifted?These students are also addressed through L.A.
- Significant increase/monitoring.
- Relevant first year in program and for transition from elementary to secondary, too lengthy -not necessary on annual basis. Increase LA teacher's work load - no time allotted to review and make changes.
- It is a bit more work initially but because our IEP's are written up as a school based team activity it means less work long term for the L.A. teacher.
- Increases documentation and meeting time for students who need consistent help.
- Quite time consuming to create an appropriate IEP - especially incorporating all the input from all stakeholders. But it is an assurance to the student that provisions have been made for them.
- It means more meetings with parents to discuss goals, objectives and services. IEP's need to be simplified!
- Greatly increases the outside school hours workload.
- Very little impact as the LA Teachers in this school have maintained similar records on students receiving LA support prior to the introduction of the 25 hrs

+ requirement.
- Too demanding.
- Extremely time-consuming.
- Excessive.
- Definitely increasing workload. Manageable if IEP can be of a checklist nature.
- Increased workload greatly, teachers' after school documentation time has increased dramatically.
- Planning what to do with the students and how to monitor progress is what by day an LA teacher does anyway.
- It might cut down on the number of IEP's written but instructional materials still need to be prepared and there still needs to be assessments and evaluations undertaken.
- IEP writing and consulting has dramatically increased the workload of LA teacher. It has also increased the workload of other teachers as well (meetings; consultation; planning).
- Increases the workload greatly. We use a short form IEP as often as possible.
- Impossible for small schools with minimal LA allocation to handle.
- Most of September and June dedicated to paper work and parent-school meetings. Teaching time diminishes.
- This takes time away from primary focus - helping students be successful.
- Impossible work load, less time with students.
- If a detailed IEP is required it is very time consuming and difficult to produce given the number of meetings involved after hours and the time spent in co-ordination and writing the IEP.
- A lot of preparation to develop the IEP with all stake holders. Modifying (adapting) the equipment and materials, updating and ongoing inventory of needs re IEP.
- Fantastic work required.
- More time spent making them up. More meetings to plan with teachers first, then parents. Too much paper work done after hours (increased time).
- Unrealistic ! We don't see students for less time than this. It isn't a quick fix!
- Increased the work load of the LA teacher as well as the regular classroom teachers.
- Extra work that already is recorded in the report card comments or school based team minutes (duplication).
- Has increased workload - written documentation and parent contacts.
- Huge increase in paper work.
- Increases the workload... it forces more testing and less direct instruction.
- Need time to co-ordinate goals between classroom teacher, LA teacher and parents. (not always in agreement). . The collaborative nature of IEP's has increased the work load and finding the necessary time to meet with teachers and parents to develop the IEP is often very difficult and sometimes impossible... in which case the LA teacher will develop the IEP by him/her self.
- I cannot possibly keep up to this requirement. The classroom teacher and teaching assistant monitor the IEP on a daily basis - I'm there to write them and at the review.
- Less time to actually work with students.
- Too much paper work - not enough time to spend with students.
- Unable to write IEP's with current resource and staffing levels.
- Overwhelming.
- More time is spent at lunch, after school and evenings to coordinate.
- Much better than 15 - but still too much paperwork - not enough time in day. Less working with kids. May affect referrals being made. Difficult to meet with teachers - not enough time to meet.
- Increases workload dramatically.
- Demands more time commitment so meetings can be coordinated.
- An incredibly time consuming process, because all of our students receive 25

or more hours.

- Increased amount of time spent at meetings getting parents and support staff to agree on a date/time for meetings. Increased time doing admin. type things.
- This requirement has been in place in our district for many years and does not represent any change in practice.
- I always have had IEP's through district designated services - eg. SLD but there is an increase in IEP's for mild/moderate LD and "Grey Area kids(70 - 85 IQ students), initial IEP time is provided by SLD teacher but all others need to be fit in somewhere.
- Greatly increases workload, forces LAT to priorize when coupled with many other demands, most are completed out of school time.
- Not a significant difference.
- More school based team meetings, finding time to write the IEP in collaboration, 25 hours equates to less than 1 hour/week of short term remediation.
- Huge increase in workload, 25 hours a year does nothing to alleviate!
- Requires closing the LAC to provide time to do necessary record keeping and definitely does increase the amount of work for LA teachers.
- Increased workload (last year alone 5 new forms were introduced to be completed by the LAT).
- Has increased the overall workload of LA teachers disproportionately.
- The teacher must spend more time developing on their own time or time will be taken from students.
- Time taken to prepare and communicate the IEP's must come from somewhere - generally, it's the direct service to students that suffers. Also, it takes from preparation time, consultation time, etc.
- Increased workload, more meetings and reports, groups are large, longer meetings - since interpreters are often needed.
- Of course, increased load, but promotes focus for group and single instruction.
- Too heavy - what is our mandate ? To teach or file papers ?
- Too many meetings with too many people.
- Decreases instructional time.
- A huge demand in communication. Coordinating IEP meetings is costly and demanding. Arranging adjudication for Gr 12's is very demanding.
- Increased, and difficult to arrange meetings with classroom teachers.
- Depends on the number of students at any time.
- No change.
- Additional meetings at noon, paperwork.
- Difficult for all LA teachers to keep up, even design IEP's for students who emerge as slow learners in specific subject. A drain on the time available - but the IEP is necessary to focus all the stakeholders on the needs of the students.
- More IEP's to write, less time for direct service, more after hours meeting time - increasingly difficult to coordinate.
- More work in documentation and paperwork.
- Overkill !
- Based on the clientele at our school, there is a definite increased work load on the LAT. We want to be accountable and professional but need the time to address the needs of those students.
- 25 hours is an improvement from 15 hours - allows for flexibility - based on student need not number of hours.
- Meetings are all held outside of school hours. The LA caseload continues to increase - whether or not they are receiving 25 or more hours per year is often not a factor.
- Workload is increased, many hours are spent after school working on IEP's. Caseload increasing therefore workload is increasing more as IEP's needed. The number of students needing support has doubled since last year and will

increase again.

- The 25 hours has not caused the increase (or decrease) as our system is based on needs. Most students (LA) need more than 25 hours assistance in a school year at the secondary level.
- IEP's result in a heavy work load at the beginning of the year and the end of the year. There are also check points throughout the year. It is more a result of increased numbers than the 25 hour stipulation.

ON ABILITY TO MANAGE STUDENT NEEDS / CASELOAD DEMANDS :

- Reduces instructional time.
- Easier to monitor goals and progress.
- Less LA "teaching time" means larger groups with less individual instruction. Goals are planned for the group rather than the individual.
- No problem.
- Makes it unwieldy.
- A major task which requires time from direct instruction. Makes us more aware of needs. Helps us to plan. A benchmark for assessing progress.
- Too much to do - not enough time to do it.
- Improved documentation and planning.
- Puts you behind in assessing the needs of students at the beginning of each semester.
- Not a significant difference.
- An advantage in meeting individual student needs and reducing stress on classroom teachers.
- Puts me on overload.
- Impossible to meet without severely cutting into instructional time.
- Increasingly less time to counsel - L.A. students are typically high risk/potential dropouts.
- More direct service time being sapped to sit in IEP meetings.
- IEP's take a lot of time to complete and this time could be better spent helping the students. IEP format needs to be simplified.
- It helps to generate effective strategies. We try to share the responsibility of case management.
- Decision to do documentation outside of school hours, so as not to not affect services to students.
- An excellent reference for teachers to keep some consistency in the students' academic planning.
- I'm not sure that IEP's are necessary, they require a lot of paperwork.
- Too demanding.
- Can only manage a limited number competently at one time.
- Collaboration with teachers/parents helpful, but each IEP represents 6 - 7 hours per year.
- Extremely difficult to find the time.
- I will definitely be re-evaluating the criteria for allowing a student a learning assistance block.
- I do IEP's as they are mandated by the ministry, it takes away from planning/collaboration time with teachers. With severe students assists to focus on reasonable goals.
- With 10% of the population needing LA support-we are always oversubscribed.
- Has made little difference since IEP's are usually written out of class time (eg. evenings, and weekends).
- IEP writing has forced the LA teacher to be more focused on each student and their strengths and weaknesses. There is more student involvement in setting goals.
- Decreases time available for instruction.

- Impossible for small schools with minimal LA allocation to handle.
- Becomes time-consuming. Difficult to meet with all parents, etc. for quality meeting.
- This takes time away from primary focus - helping students be successful.
- Less time to meet the needs of students.
- If the LA caseload is too large, it is very difficult to adequately manage student needs. Some LA students are grouped with Reading Recovery students.
- We priorize the case loads within the school and allocate time accordingly.
- Because so much time was spent on IEP's /parent meetings etc. it was difficult to begin the year dealing with the needs of the students rather than doing IEP's.
- Depends on the various classes and their needs for that year. Needing extra teacher assistants to carry out programs under direction of teachers (either classroom or LA).
- Less.
- If I meet the above requirement I wouldn't have time to work with the students for whom the IEP's were written.
- IEP's are a more organized approach for documenting and managing student needs than past methods. Although at times they can be time consuming they increase efficiency and communication among all the stakeholders.
- Not effective.
- Helps manage needs by prioritizing and involving teachers and parents in the action plan.
- Increased time on paperwork, filing, record keeping - decreases time for preparation and at times decreases number of students seen.
- Minimal.
- Paper - excessive, a need to reduce and provide alternatives. Teacher to write IEP and the LA teacher to co-ordinate.
- IEP's help streamline instructional focus and student needs.
- Many students get minimal help. More small group style IEP's are done - they cannot all be individual.
- LA teacher has too great a caseload and not enough time.
- Limits availability of direct instruction.
- Too little time to meet with teachers now, too much paperwork to keep updated, some teachers have more needier kids than others so less preparation time, meeting time for all.
- Less time available to work with students.
- Decreases time to directly work with students.
- Time spent developing IEP's takes away from time that could be spent in direct instruction.
- There is a long waiting list of students for services from LAT regardless of whether an IEP is required.
- Affect has been negligible.
- Documentation requires significant time but not always for 25 hours plus - meeting with teacher/parent over mild/moderate LD and "Grey Area " kids who may not all receive services takes lots of time.
- Complexity, time increased on IEP days scheduled to deal with Low Incidence children other students may lose designated assistance.
- Not a significant difference.
- More meetings/IEP's... less direct service.
- Provides a clear statement of student needs and ways to meet those needs - IEP's are a valuable tool.
- Takes away from preparation of materials and for direct work with students.
- Reduced instructional time because of time spent on other paperwork.
- Increases time spent outside of instructional hours - writing reports, consultations, parent meetings, time for planning daily programs decreases.
- They limit time spent on the students.

- Less effective.
- More group work in most cases. More co-operative work for students.
- Let's minimize the rquirements for paper trails !
- A great deal of tracking and communication with classroom teacher.
- Improved.
- Depends on the numbers of students at any time.
- No change.
- Increased organizational ability, decreased direct instruction.
- The IEP is necessary to focus all the stakeholders on the needs of the students.
- More time spent writing IEP's therefore less time to manage case load demands.
- More need to be vigilant with record keeping.
- Really doesn't impact my ability to manage needs - I just find them a real nuisance to do except for the severely disabled students who have personal assistants.
- Makes it more difficult.
- Over abundance of paperwork.
- Less service for more clients.
- Less time for instruction, too much time on paper work, although accountability is important.
- Encouraged teachers to team teach - identify needs/alternate strategies together/adapting materials.
- We need to put a lot of extra hours in after school to get the paper- work and meetings done.
- Caseload has increased greatly. Sometimes I feel I can not possibly meet all the needs of the students.
- IEP helps to clarify goals and establish strategies to achieve these goals. Sometimes there is so much paper work it could take away from planning time, research time and time with students.

ON PARENT INVOLVEMENT :

- More parental involvement.
- No noticeable changes.
- Very little parent involvement.
- Increases involvement.
- Builds trust.
- Increased time spent with parents on IEP's - positive.
- Clear expectations.
- 50% of parents do not show up to sign IEP's, even after repeated requests to do so.
- Increased input regarding goals for student.
- Generally positive, although at times, one major challenge of IEP meetings is to find time for the mtgs. - the reality is that many families work hrs. that don't "mesh" with school hours. The time to make calls to set up mtgs. can also be time consuming.
- We have many working parents and meeting times are not always convenient to all personnel concerned with meetings.
- Parents are encouraged to have realistic expectations for their children. They know what their students are doing.
- Little impact.
- Impossible to schedule all parents for sit down meetings - if students are long term we may do by phone. We also attend report card teacher -parent interviews.
- Good for parents to be involved in educational planning.
- Mostly evening work since so many parents work - harder to contact.

- Takes time to set up meeting. Meet after school hours. Good way to get information on the student.
- It ensures parents are contacted and have an understanding of the interventions. When supported consistently at home this helps with student progress.
- More meetings required.
- We meet with parents often, with students who have IEP's and those who don't.
- Parents are made aware early on as to the precise expectations of their child.
- The writing of IEP's would involve the parents to come to meetings. Not all parents wish to participate in the meetings required for IEP's.
- Slightly increased - parent L.A. teacher contact time.
- For some increased participation.
- Makes them aware of services.
- Certainly has helped get the parents in the school and gives them a better understanding of son/daughter's specific needs and what is planned to address them.
- This is a requirement that is absolutely impossible to manage the time it takes to do, planning IEP meetings with our large caseload is prohibitive. No release time is available meaning LAC and classroom teacher have to spend large amounts of before and after school time to meet this criteria.
- Focus is more on the student as it is their plan and will not be successful without their ownership. Reassures parent in some cases.
- Has made little difference.
- The parents are now very aware of what their child is working on. IEP's have stimulated more dialogue with parents.
- Increases their involvement often.
- School is a highly involved parental school. Much informal discussion is conducted.
- They (most of them) appreciate taking part and being kept up to date. Difficult to get to all parents.
- Improves relationship vs. parents and school.
- No impact on involvement of parents except - more paper work- less time to meet.
- Sometimes it is impossible to have IEP meetings with all parents as they are unavailable or simply not interested.
- School based team meetings. communication book filled daily (re homework expectations), meeting with parents at report card time.
- Involved with IEP's time consuming and no extra time given. Many nights spent with parents.
- Parents are supportive, but again extra meetings are required.
- Same.
- If I met with parents to plan and review for the "required" IEP's there would be no time to see a student.
- Parents have become more actively involved in their child's progress because they have greater input and a role to play in the overall success of the plan.
- Minimal.
- More involved.
- Limited effect.
- Difficult to involve parents due to time constraints and language difficulties.
- Parents of low incidence students often have unrealistic expectations.
- Some parents want to be involved but others do not.
- Parents whose children have IEP's sign and review them with us.
- IEP's give written information to parents.
- Very difficult to get some parents in for IEP meetings/ a report card signature may be enough.
- More involvement of parent. A more collaborative, holistic and integrated

approach in problem-solving.

- Parents are better informed, but more meetings result.
- Difficult reaching them now! Too little time to meet before, during, after school (too many single parent, working families), trouble getting them involved as some have no transportation .
- More parental involvement in the educational plan for their child.
- Has not made any noticeable impact.
- Minimal time for parent involvement.
- Slightly more involvement with parents although we've always had high parent involvement for majority of students.
- It is not possible to involve parents directly in the writing of 15 IEP's in a time allocation of 7.5 hours per week.
- I think this is most important and about 95 % of our parents come to meetings - just takes time, we have very involved parents.
- Much greater degree of parent involvement, time to initiate, prepare questions - concerns, meeting and follow-up on input that is critical to success.
- Not a significant difference.
- Positive - most parents welcome the support.
- Remained the same - our parents prefer not to attend formal meetings. We had good support before the IEP requirement.
- No change.
- Too time consuming to involve parents in planning of program. They are shown IEP at conferences and made aware of goals and needs at that time.
- More parental involvement.
- Does make for increased parental involvement.
- Does keep parents informed.
- Appears to be less since they expect the school to deal with problems - though there are many exceptions.
- Little - being that they were completed by teacher or LA teacher.
- Must attend IEP meetings and make commitments for home study (time, tutor).
- Formalizes involvement when signed.
- Not much as it is very difficult to contact parents.
- Parents required to read/sign IEP.
- Parents usually do show up for consultation at IEP meetings. Some parents are often harder to engage in process.
- Parent involvement is minimal due to so many IEP's and not enough time to meet with everyone.
- More communication and discussion.
- I find virtually no difference between now and "pre- IEP" time. I always sat down with the parents to discuss goals, anyway I find the IEP's really are often just a time waster.
- Often difficult to get parental support.
- More parents involved.
- Encourages parent involvement early in the year - what actions can be taken.
- Parents are involved in a similar way regardless of the 25 hour requirement.
- Very hard to have meetings with parents as there are so many IEP's
- which have to be done and documentation. Parents do not always
- come to meetings.
- IEP's give parents the opportunity to be involved in their child's program. It puts an onus on parents to know how their child is being helped.

ON PROVISION OF SERVICE TO STUDENTS :

- Reduced direct services.
- Little affect.
- Less time to work and teach students.

- Great - keeps you on track.
- Makes it cumbersome.
- A positive influence.
- Less time spent on direct instruction to students.
- Improved service.
- Provides clear guidelines and plan for students.
- Not a significant difference. Generally the IEP concept fills a very worthwhile need - it forces the "players" to work as a team - for the most part is very successful.
- Can impact on time available to students in upper grades - specifically grade 7 where caseload exceeds amount of time teacher has assigned.
- Helps with goals. Allows for their needs to be met even when not working with the L A Teacher.
- More goals to meet.
- At the beginning of working with a student they are a great organizational skill but it is impossible to do with each child to the amount they would need.
- Less effective service - more students = less time.
- Decrease in direct service time.
- Has some positive impact of service to students in class when teacher uses suggested adaptations.
- The brainstorming and shared responsibility combined with the setting of review dates helps to ensure a more effective service. It is less hit and miss than in past practice.
- No effect at this school.
- Students find some reassurance that their academic expectations are clear.
- Documentation of the plan and progress.
- Less direct time for students.
- Clarifies roles, responsibilities and goals for all.
- Good to refer to for teaching and reporting.
- Definitely has cut back on the amount of time I spend with students (ie. phoning and meeting for IEP purposes). T.A. time is made available when possible.
- It establishes a record of type of service which can then be followed up by next year's teacher but the length of them and what is required to be included on an IEP takes away rom planning time and is far too much preparation.
- If a student is not willing to be part of the plan then SBT has good case for refusing LA service.
- Direct service time to students has been reduced in order to write IEP.
- Teachers must write IEP's before becoming thoroughly acquainted with student and their background.
- Decreases time available.
- Takes time away from primary focus - helping students be successful.
- Less time with students.
- It is often difficult to provide students with enough individual /group instruction in order to adequately meet their academic needs.
- We priorize the case loads within the school and allocate time accordingly.
- Very little affect - we would have still serviced these students.
- Same service (is hoped). Take for short time so don't have to do them.
- Less.
- Service to students would be adversely affected as per above.
- The service to students has improved because there is a team of
- involved people planning and charting the child's development.
- More time on paper work / meetings reduces amount of time available for teaching.
- May limit number of students accepted. Very time consuming and of little value as learning resources teachers must be very flexible as to activities, projects and tasks.

- Takes time from direct teaching.
- Less direct contact due to excessive paperwork and meetings required.
- If time is taken out of the teaching day to work on IEP's it takes away instructional time from students. However, sometimes that is necessary for collaboration.
- Some students get far more support than other students because they have an IEP.
- Focuses attention to specifics.
- Less direct service.
- We try to maintain service; it just means much more work after hours.
- Longer waiting list, shorter time frame to work with kids, kids still get serviced whether an IEP or not.
- Less time available.
- LAT's have had to remove themselves from being involved with cases not involving learning difficulties (eg. behaviour, articulation, counselling).
- Affect has been negligible.
- Paperwork, meetings always affects student service, but can be equally valuable with collaboration/goal setting results.
- At scheduled times direct instruction, supervision may be lost. Additional pressure to add on - catch up.
- Not a significant difference.
- Less time for direct service as IEP is indirect.
- Decreased time for students - we spend a large portion of time developing and managing IEP's.
- IEP preparation does decrease student instruction time, however IEP 's help to provide more focused and individualized instruction.
- Takes time away from students and preparation of materials.
- Decreased opportunities to provide direct instruction to students; less creative student approach.
- If done in work time, less students will be seen.
- Provides focus - direction - and goal direction; as well as 'markers' for success.
- More accountability.
- Depends on the numbers of students at any time.
- Good.
- The problem areas can be addressed specifically so that services can be requested and are often provided.
- Time is taken away from service to students; specifically in the fall when IEP's writing is intensive.
- No change.
- May have an influence on grouping students.
- No impact, except severely disabled.
- Gives direction, identifies roles and specific strategies.
- Students still receive same service but for less time than before because LA time allocated is less than required to meet IEP requirements.
- Greater stress level on LA teachers to try to meet all the needs - and documentation requirements and work with classroom teachers.
- The background and attitudes of secondary students has a bearing on their acceptance and cooperation of LA services. Sometimes it takes an entire year to dispel past perceptions so all of these items change drastically for each student.
- IEP's make for a more organized and efficient student program.

ON RECORD KEEPING PRACTICES :

- Increased workload - more paper work.
- Improves updates.

- More data is collected and filed. Small closet- sized LA rooms are over crowded with paper.
- I'm extremely well organized!
- Makes them impossible.
- Makes us more accountable.
- Continued accountability.
- More organized.
- Doing more record keeping in off hours - computer sure helps. . Assists in accurate reporting practices. Makes sure a record is placed in the student's file for future reference. Can check to see if goals are being met.
- Greater time required. More paperwork.
- Good idea but again it is impossible unless you double LAC allotments.
- Good to keep track of students progress in goals being set.
- Must be brief, yet efficient due to numbers.
- Increased load.
- Increases teachers' after hours workload.
- Keeping notes on the IEP helps to inform which strategies are effective and which aren't. It helps to keep students progressing.
- More time required.
- Spend more time documenting. Most of this occurs outside regular school hours.
- Again, time consuming and awkward. We dream of having technology on day that will assist in this procedure.
- Significant time increase.
- More paperwork detracts from the delivery of services to students.
- Student work folders should also be considered part of their IEP.
- Some concern over deterioration (or possible deterioration) of services given the fact that more demands are being made on LAT's while the actual # of LAT's is being cut.
- Less time for students.
- Increased time spent - more thorough records.
- Concise record. Helpful permanent record.
- Hasn't affected a great deal. I have a file of each student receiving LA help anyway.
- Far too much paperwork and lengthy, takes away from service to students. Provides a format for documentation but needs to be streamlined.
- Requires file folders and filing cabinet, but these can be re - used.
- Has made little difference. Students are still assessed and evaluated. Day plans and notes are still kept.
- The IEP is a relevant document. It has made teachers more accountable.
- Intensifies the need for ongoing record keeping.
- More paper to add to student file.
- No impact.
- Record keeping is generally completed at home or on my own time, there is very little time during the school day.
- It is very time consuming.
- The IEP has made it easier to record material but I still use a separate file system for each.
- Generally the same (pre and post testing), do some modified with larger group.
- If I wanted to be a paper shuffler I'd have gone into accounting !
- Record keeping practices have improved because IEP's provide a more systematic and accountable approach to following an individual's progress through school.
- I'm not convinced that it is necessary.
- Standardization of practices within the district is helpful.
- Decreases efficiency - more time consuming than useful.

- Increases paper trail and filing.
- Alternative required.
- Not much, I would be keeping records whether the student has an IEP or not.
- None - IEP's replace planning that was usually done for small groups in the past. Now one student gets more time, the others get less.
- Focuses attention on specifics.
- More time recording/ means less time with kids.
- Onerous.
- Too much paperwork as it is.
- More time has to be found for this increasingly demanding practice.
- Increases documentation significantly.
- Creates an unmanageable amount of paper work and files.
- District committee has produced shortened, manageable form.
- Most students with 25 hours LAT are automatically IEP students, IEP's justify the very nature of their concerns.
- Increases workload... amount of time to collaborate and record, keeping changes to working plan - review with stakeholders.
- Not a significant difference.
- Enhances record-keeping if IEP is continuing and used as a base.
- Increases time spent in this area but provides a comprehensive record to provide more focused and individualized instruction.
- Goals more clearly defined - more accountability.
- Improvement.
- Increases time spent, variety/complexity of forms is increased; more time spent in documentation; detracts from planning.
- Not as detailed - updates are often done at P/T conferences.
- Little.
- Good - keeps things in order - provides perspective on growth from year to year.
- Time consuming but contributes to accountability.
- Increases record-keeping ten-fold.
- A huge demand in paperwork.
- Little change - but formalizes records.
- Helpful.
- Time consuming - but valuable in terms of focus.
- Adds another form to record keep.
- Much more work here.
- None.
- Overkill.
- Major overload.
- Efficient documentation - short form IEP.
- This has become more structured - as we need to do more IEP's.
- Record keeping needs have increased - often it "seems" that record keeping is greater than actually working with students.
- This infers that records are always up-to-date. This is not always true for a wide variety of reasons.
- With IEP's you know where you are going and what has been accomplished. It gives continuity from year to year. It shows successful and unsuccessful strategies.

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QUESTION 24 (SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR IEP'S)

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES / SUGGESTIONS

- IEP only if: program monitored or student on wait list for Resource Room.
- School- Based testing indicates need.
- Proposed length of service is long term.
- Parental permission is needed for service.
- To meet needs of parents and students.
- Achievement is one year or more behind IEP expectations.
- Intervention has been tried and assessed.
- Classroom teacher and LA teacher decide whether the LA program will be part of the overall IEP or if the student should be put on LA - IEP.
- Student should receive more than 25 hours LA per year.Working one on one with student.
- If the student's program has been adapted or modified or if the student receives more than 25 hours LA time.
- Where parental involvement is helpful or requested by parent.
- Where more aggressive programming is required.
- If there is time available they all should have them. Should be simple and practical for most kids.
- If the student is not ' identified ', the student should not require an IEP.
- Ministry or school-based identification criteria.
- Current progress in class. Consultation between teacher, LAT and possibly School - Based Team.
- Over 50 hours per year of special program.
- Type of intervention ie. short term or long term help.
- All 'designated' students. School Based Team decision for all other students (S.B.T. to include classroom teacher, A.O., staff) (may include parents/student input).
- When you think . . . 1 regular wk = 15-25 hrs. of class time - and that classroom teachers do not create I.E.P. (outside of report cards) perhaps that 25 hr. requirement should be increased to 40 or 50 . . .
- Re: I.E.P. - so much depends on factors such as school size/ composition/demographics/needs/ one set of rules (provincially) makes it difficult.
- The earlier the intervention, the better (all students receiving service get an IEP). Effective communication for parents, teachers and future service needs - especially if they move.
- The needs of the student in order to be successful. This allows all students to be successful to their ability levels.
- Only needed for 'designated' students.
- 'Designated' students only .... goals set out for others.
- If child is significantly below the expectations of grade level as indicated by a psychoeducational assessment.
- No IEP's for assisting with classroom assignments". IEP's only when course content is adapted or modified, or program is modified.
- Intermediate student - to avoid letter grades. (+ 25 hours)
- We decide whether the student should be on a modified or adapted program and for grade 7 L.A. students, and special case students.
- School - Based team; LA Teacher; Classroom Teacher; School Psychologist all provide input as to who needs an IEP and why.

- All 'designated' students should have a filed IEP. IEP's should be reviewed on a regular basis at least three times a year (more often if necessary to adjust interventions which may not be successful).
- If the program is significantly different from the classroom program and involves 25 hours or more hours of instruction.
- Based on psychological assessments.
- At present all our modified students have IEP's - No other students in L.A. have them.
- Should be full IEP's for 'ministry numbered' students or students that require major adaptations in the class.
- I feel that 'designated' students only should require IEP's.
- Staying with a time allotment, ie. 25 or more hours of L.A. service.
- We are satisfied with the 25 hrs. + guideline.
- If student meets Ministry criteria as well as short term plans.
- If student cannot meet curriculum and/or classroom goals an IEP is in order.
- Teacher need (to support the teacher); information for the parent (to facilitate home follow through and review).
- If classroom material has to be modified so that a student can be successful.
- Pupils who are expected to need further assessment should have priority and those whose program needs the most modification/adaptation.
- If students are currently receiving LA support and their needs are such that they require adaptations or modifications in any of their classes then they should have an IEP.
- Criteria should be based on the severity of a student's difficulties not on hours taught. Parent involvement for LAC - IEP's should be dropped other than making them available to parents. If a full IEP meeting is needed, only students that are 'ministry designated' with resource teacher support ie. someone with a smaller caseload.
- If the student is more than 6 weeks in LAC or if the SBT requests the information to monitor progress. A parent request is never refused if student is being considered for LA.
- Repeated discussions at SBT. Extensive program modifications.
- Delay of two years or more behind grade level.
- The student needs an IEP only if their program has been modified or adapted. Students with social, emotional or behavior problems may also need an IEP. The students who are low average and need more time or a second interpretation of an assignment that receive LA do not need an IEP.
- The extent of adaptation or modification of curriculum, the number of subjects being dealt with, other complicating factors eg. behavior problems, involvement of other personnel (CEA, speech/language, etc).
- L.A. programs should focus on: teacher /parent/child and L.A. communication, quick assessments and intensive teaching intervention, progress can be assessed through teacher/LA evaluation tools. Note: when people "talk", much of the formality can be removed. When there are a minimum of 4 players it will be known how things are going. Also, the "art" of good teaching is being overrun by paperwork and procedures".
- Full IEP for students needing a complete individual program. Skill specific IEP's for most students.
- LA students could get by with an abridged IEP format.
- Amount of service provided, individual basis - not all students getting support block for more than 25 hours need an IEP. Do students needs require an IEP ?
- When the student has needs that are exceptional, some students require ongoing support to be successful at a high school but do not require an IEP.
- If an LA student is not designated as a Resource Student and less detailed IEP is sufficient for their needs.
- Follow provincial guidelines.

- 'Designated' students only.
- Student is assessed by assessment service and is 2 years below grade level. Whether service is long-term (ongoing) or only for a short term period. (discipline areas). Some behaviors may need an action plan.
- Frequency of visit by the student... the kind of instruction provided and extent.... length of time estimated for referral/remediation, etc.... the kind and level of success anticipated.
- Severe learning / behaviour needs only.
- It should be limited to: those receiving designated funding; those for whom it will truly assist in the planning of academic programming/progress.... those for whom the IEP will be necessary to access required support ie. provincial adjudication.
- If they require modification by the teacher in the classroom of their program. Also, adaptation of materials and strategies in the classroom should be documented for individual students in a form of IEP.
- Number of hours of LA -, short intervention periods ought not to require an IEP.
- 25 hours seems OK as it translates into 3 X 40 min. for 12 weeks - about one term.
- Learning resources students rarely if ever require an IEP - the nature of the program is short term, very specific and IEP's are not useful. All special needs students have IEP's. Small schools have tremendous advantage - communication is very easy, often informal and interventions are usually immediate.
- Severity of problem, additional services, students moving.
- Degree of modification of classroom work; would be failing if graded; going to Central Screening for further assessment and/or placement.
- If the student's academic level in reading and math is at least 2 or more years below chronological age.
- I prepare IEP's for all students that I provide direct instruction to, however, those IEP's are limited to the specific needs that are being addressed. I don't think for most high incidence students, an IEP needs to cover all aspects of what goes on in the classroom. IEP's for low incidence and behaviour students need to be much more comprehensive.
- If a teacher wants it and will use it; identification of a need; student is over 2 years behind in reading/math; student requires much modified and/or adapted work in all subject areas; student has an assigned Teaching Assistant; student has 'slow learner' designation from a Psychological Assessment.
- Focus more on students who need support.
- IEP's necessary on 'designated' students only - otherwise an in-depth report card - including skills/summary should suffice.
- Student experiences failure (consistently); severe social / emotional issues; potential 'designation'; low/average learners; mild to moderate L.D.
- If child needs a modified program in order to function in the classroom; if have ministry 'designation'; if child has involvement with numerous support staff and/or other agencies.
- Ministry 'funded'.
- Needs of student... only IEP's for real mentally handicapped (Resource Room types, moderate to severe/profound intellectual difficulties).
- If School - Based team decides student should receive a block of LA time; educational history; if they are a 'ministry numbered' student.
- I do not think it should be an LA student per say, but any student who is not able to deal with regular classroom requirements - unless certain adaptations are put into place or if the student is unable to meet expectations then modify.
- Student has a 'designated funding category'.
- If the student needs adaptations and /or modifications to curriculum... some of our students simply need some extra help to acquire the same outcome as

peers.

- IEP is used to record successful adaptations/modifications to instructional strategies, assessment practices.
- Intermediate - cannot meet course expectations in specific subjects and because of effort/learning complications is not an IP mark and/or has learning disabilities documented through assessment.
- Primary students outside of widely held expectations. Also some behaviour kids need IEP's because of significant behaviour/emotional concerns.
- Driven by Ministry Guidelines, District Policy... Ideally every student would benefit from a functioning IEP; perhaps a more informal plan could be used based on degree of need and objectives - curriculum for a particular age level - criteria.
- Where significant program modification exists.... 25 hour criteria is a reasonable "check".
- Ongoing support, modification, adaptation because students cannot meet widely held expectations.
- Ministry 'designations' - Yes. Others: any long term student.
- School Based Team decision... based on ability to receive a satisfactory comparative grade (eg. at least a C- or should be IEP - not necessarily related to service provided).
- If instruction in LA is different from the regular classroom then may need an IEP. If we are reinforcing the regular class; then there's no need. ie. necessary for modified programs - but not for help with managing regular programs. . Because I feel IEP's are a valuable tool I feel 25 hours is reasonable. However, the LAC teachers need to be provided with help. In our school district this help is slowly disappearing. (eg. Teacher Aides no longer exist), Therefore we are being loaded down with more and more work. Cut backs are causing great concern.
- Group IEP for students classified as "LA". More individualized for 'designated funding category' student (Resource).
- Anecdotal reports with interim reports and report cards have more effect and reduces the paperwork which is repetitive.
- If learning outcomes are significantly altered - clarify through Ministry what 'significant' means. If regular, sustained support is needed for student success. Note; - modifications/adaptations should be recorded/documented somewhere.
- An IEP is required if specific programs are modified and if long-term assistance is given.
- The degree to which programs are adapted; degree to which student is below grade level; length of time anticipated in providing support; time span (5 months or 1 year).
- If the student is classed as 'special education' then he needs an IEP.
- Whether there is a need to access resources beyond those available at the school level.
- Students 'designated' by school board; students receiving 25 hours or more of LA to receive short IEP.
- Only with those with 'designated' special needs and at risk LD students. Not for those who have been tested and have obtained low scores in both verbal or performance tests.
- 25 hours of LA services.
- An hour or monthly requirement is acceptable for this school's population... 25 hours or 2/3 month period.
- Significant modification/adaptations in key areas required for students to be successful in the classroom.
- Only 'designated students' should require an IEP. Reports for the files are adequate for LA students.
- Depends on the needs of the students.

- Whether or not the student has a learning disability or is handicapped in some manner.
- Any student with adaptations though they do not have LA in - class support, should have an IEP.
- Psychological testing; district testing; teacher evaluation.
- Inability to cope in the classroom without excessive demands on the teacher's time.
- Long-term vs. short-term services. Number of hours - 25 hours per year would indicate an extensive IEP needs to be developed.
- Teacher who works primarily with 'low incidence' students says "severity of the disabling condition" is the criteria. Teacher of the primarily show learner and low average ability students would say to find the best way of adapting or modifying learning outcomes and instructional strategies and providing access to M.E. consideration on Provincial Final (eg. time allowance,scribing).
- Those students who require long term intervention and support; modified programmes.
- If receiving direct pull-out instruction (more than 25 hours); if adaptations in the classroom are made; if modifications are made.
- Length of service; type of service; SBT philosophy.
- Severe, ongoing disability. If we need to have an IEP for 25 hours, I think it should be greatly simplified, stating only the main goals... often techniques, etc., change greatly during a program. Also, all the history, challenges, are very time-consuming and should be taken out unless truly pertinent. This all takes a lot of time to complete and is not usually terribly beneficial!
- When the School - Based Team deems it necessary.
- The criteria used should involve whether the case is deemed serious enough by SBT personnel (counsellors, psychologists, speech/ language pathologist) and/or will require actions beyond the school setting such as other agencies and /or other school board facilities or placements (ie. itinerant teacher, teaching and evaluation centre).
- Potential for designation in another category.
- Two years below grade level; more than 15 hours as per 1996 regulations/guidelines.
- If modifications are needed for learning and for reporting period; if adaptations are needed for learning and for reporting period; if students receive more than ten hours of LA support... written inserts are provided for reporting period.
- Students who have missed school due to illness and need 'catch-up' should not require an IEP... students who attend short clinics on specific skills, eg. timetables should not require IEP's.... regular ongoing intervention - especially in reading and writing need IEP for adaptations.
- If the student's program differs greatly from the regular classroom program in one or more areas they should have an IEP, otherwise a less structured format would be more useful.
- Any student who comes to me for learning assistance receives an IEP (checklist format), indicating what services have been provided for them.
- Any student who requires a program differentiation or classroom/test adaptations receives an IEP. We take advisement from referring schools but frequently develop IEP's on a "needs" basis.
- All 'Learning Disabled' students coming out of the classroom need an IEP.

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QUESTION 27 (POSITIVE CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THE LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PROGRAM).

SUMMARY OF POSITIVE CHANGES

- Introduction of computer programs.
- More communications between classroom teachers and LA teachers, collaborative planning, consultation.
- School Based Team - team support for the students and classroom teachers.
- LA teachers increasingly qualified for their positions. Number of workshops available.
- More school-based team involvement - collaboration and decision making. More flexible/ adaptable delivery models - according to school needs.
- Increased communication between interested parties.
- Computer technology and programs. Some awareness of effects of alcohol and drugs on student's learning.
- We have tried many different things - methods and approaches - and are now clear on what is effective with LA delivery.
- Increased number of students served as time has been increased from .3 to .4. Increased communication - teachers, students, parents, administrators.
- Improved testing. Improved record keeping. Improved efficiency of school based team.
- Use of technology for LD students. Mainstreaming.
- The administration seems to value the service more.
- It has become a more integrated and responsive process. A team approach.
- Focus on small group instruction that replaces classroom subjects, and does not add to them.
- The use of an I.E.P. The advent of the School Based Team.
- The LA Teacher now teaches students rather than marking exercises and supervising the students while doing corrections in the class- room. L.A. Teachers are used as resource persons now.
- Emphasis on earlier assessment so not as backlogged at the intermediate level.
- We are part of a learning support team. Change from remediation centre to collaborative and support model for students, teachers and parents. Teachers more open to collaboration so LAC services enhance classroom output instead of being seen as a separate program. More focus on strategies than on separate program.
- For five years we have implemented an 'Integrated Model' of L.A. Service. This best meets the needs of our diversified population and contributes to strong collaboration and cooperation between L.A. T and regular teachers.
- Excellent rapport between L. A. teachers and classroom teachers. Favorable comments.
- The emphasis on compiling and filing, and reviewing IEP's.
- Our staff is starting to better understand the needs of "slow" learners. L.A./School Psychologists work very well together.
- Variety of service options.
- Flexibility to offer small group instruction/classes. Development of special programs/support for " at-risk " students. Recognition of the value of Teacher Assistants in L.A. programs.
- Children have met IEP goals. Reading Recovery has had huge positive impact on students' reading.

- The development of the Special Ed. Team to co-ordinate and monitor service delivery for all aspects of special ed. (has helped clarify the role of Learning Assistance at our school).
- The increased support and recognition of the effectiveness of LAC on the part of the staff... support for LAC program (collaborative model - staff support requested adaptations).
- Move to 'inclusiveness' as much as possible is good !
- Teachers' Assistant service has been invaluable.
- Resource Room viewed positively. SOLO program - skill building and enrichment. SSA's better trained and a strong team concept. Positive staff support for programs -good attendance at IEP meetings.
- We are able to design our program to meet the needs of the student population with whom we work. This varies from year to year and school to school.
- Having the opportunity to work with some student in a Reading Recovery model. Having the consistency of the same LA teacher 2 years in a row. (This is very important to a small school).
- Clearer idea of development and use of IEP's. More involvement of all concerned in child's program development.
- Teacher support is more positive. A more positive attitude overall by pupils.
- Introduction of Teaching Assistants in the schools. IEP's detailing the accommodation/modifications students are receiving. Contribution of peer tutors. Using criterion-referenced assessment for students with an LA block.
- We are becoming much more adept at identifying student difficulties and more resources are available to us to remediate. Unfortunately this has also resulted in larger caseloads.
- A larger room to accommodate more students. Computer equipment current enough so students can work on any course and use the same programs at home and at school.
- Perhaps the most significant is the increase in classroom teacher support as their student population has become more diverse in it's needs. They need someone who's judgement they trust to zero in on students' needs so they can use their limited contact time with the student to the maximum benefit.
- Streamlined the process for getting services to students through a school designed pre - referral form.
- At our school math LA was offered to the whole school during X-block daily. Up to 14 students attended at a time. Their attendance was sent to their classroom teachers. This has helped LA to lose some to the stigma of "the room for dummies".
- We know more about language acquisition, how the brain works, learning disabilities, AD/HD, FAS, etc.
- The experience at this school is probably unique, it is hard to highlight positive change. Administrator as the sole person to handle LA is probably not the best combination.
- Staff changes. Cannot comment about last few years.
- Positive outlook of students towards receiving assistance in this school.
- Being a single (.75) teacher department, I have been able to implement my own strategies and have developed a program that hopefully serves the needs of the school population as well as my needs are met.
- Has a positive image. More students are being serviced. Students who "struggle" are having more successes in other classes.... through emotional, social and academic support.
- Development of school based team with regular meetings and reports including follow-up for individual needs of students.
- Integrated model is emphasized particularily at the Intermediate level (ie. improved self-esteem).
- There was no LA program in this school until 2 1/2 years ago. Teachers and

students are becoming very supportive. Parents are requesting Resource Room for students.

- Having a district assessor or consultant. Some of the Pro-D available.
- We consider the change to accommodate "drop in" LA to be positive.
- With cutbacks in LA time more paperwork and more meetings.... there has been little in the way of positive change.
- Increased academic success. Support of paraprofessionals. Open door policy to assist all students requiring help. Acceptance of Special Education within all school functions and endeavors. Lack of stigma to come to LA for help.
- Continuity across district, clarifying of policy and referral process (ie. form re-written), district focus and development of Early Intervention Reading Programs brought great success. Continuing increase in support and professional development resulting in valuable role of LA in school.
- Better assessment practices, provision of short-term "drop-in" service, better reports (on insert forms) that contain statements of current achievement levels, better collaboration with staff and other support services.
- When learning resource teachers become "settled" in their positions (ie. program has continuity) trust and rapport with school staff and parents occurs - the program becomes more efficient and more meaningful for students. Teacher/student relationships are key and in small group settings can be powerful.
- Attractive environment for LA, motivating materials, CD Rom and computer programs.
- More collaboration with classroom teachers, at Intermediate level, phonics and reading diagnostics to develop basic literacy skills.
- Resource Room established, gifted identified and monitored, collaboration among teachers and parents.
- Some release time for IEP development has been very helpful. Pro D opportunities to keep up with new developments and research have been appreciated.
- Training in use of District Problem Solving Process from Iowa, U.S.A./ Training in writing intervention plans for A.R.C. / Development of Curriculum Based Measurement Norms for Grades 1-7 in Reading Accuracy, Writing - words written and words spelled correctly. . . None !
- We're not sure.
- Use of SPRC/ Student Assistants; introduction of technology (Success Maker); Peer Tutor program; linking with Resource Room to provide service in each time table block.
- Reading Recovery. A renewed emphasis on Early Intervention. Professional Development on the effectiveness and structure of S.B.T. Implementation of a Pre-Referral Process.
- Children that we accepted from a local First Nations School are happy and learning. A student with ADD/Tourette's Syndrome received a major award for improvement last year.
- CEA's allotted to School Based Team - new this year. BCLA has become more active. BC Binder for Special Education has been published.
- More students accessing this service. Improved technology. LA teachers with diverse subject backgrounds.
- Has become more consultative and collaborative. LAT has become "case manager". LAT chairs School - Based Team. LAT co-ordinates r eferrals, meetings, placements, debriefings re: assessments, etc.
- Increase in study skills instruction. Introduction of Teacher Orientation Meetings. Skill Development Center Alert List, Volunteer Tutors. Criterion Referenced Assessment. Structured application of support materials.
- Improved communication/involvement with parents; Including students in decision making; the IEP team. Humanistic approach has won over parents/kids who have in the past been very negative towards school.

- Increased emphasis on consultation. In-class assistance.
- Collaborative - consultative aspect. Involvement in SBT - I think the LAT should chair the SBT. Mixture of in class/out of class service. Focus not always on remediation "fix-it" but adaptation/modification to ensure success.
- District Formula maintains status quo. Provision of school support workers. Access to some budget for IEP's - eg. Low Incidence. Net-working through computer based 'inclusion profiles'.
- More technology eg. Success Maker. Training in Reading Recovery.
- This role is perceived as an extremely demanding role. Often can't keep up with demands therefore, not very satisfying. Unfortunately, our school has not perceived many positive changes due to reduced time and lack of resources. Out LAT works extremely hard with a smile on her face.
- Addition of Success Maker program... 4 different LA teachers bring a variety of expertise - Science, Math, S.S., Language Arts.
- More teacher acceptance of, and knowledge of adaptation and modification strategies. Better articulation with feeder schools. Self-directed computer learning systems are being introduced now (Plato now, and Pathfinder to come).
- We found that working with students strictly in the classes was disruptive and ineffectual. The pull-out method does much more for students.
- More assistance from District Psychologist in identification of students. Role of school-based team as 'screen'. "White" Book helps clarify and classify (identify) Special Needs Students. More teacher understanding and competencies re special education... eg., a number of our teachers have received training in autism, A.D.H.D., F.A.S.
- Much more participation of classroom teachers in accessing LAC resources and receiving consultation services from LAC teachers. More taking of responsibility by children for following extra support offered. Increased number of volunteers (parents and other adults) in LAC program - under direction of the LAC teacher(s).
- Greater modifications in programs and expectations in the classroom. Greater stress on empowering students through the teaching of learning strategies. Building of student's self-esteem and confidence. Positive attitude towards LAC program (students and teachers and parents).
- Various assessment tools have been introduced. Different service provision models have been explored.
- More direct instruction to students. Not having to do prep time from LA time. Introduction of Reading Recovery as a pilot program from district.
- Team and grade groupings for specific Resource Room.
- We had a .5 increase 2 years ago which allowed us to meet High School students' needs. Unfortunately we have lost that position in budget cuts. The district had money to contract for much needed Level C testing and we were able to get most Psycho-ed assessments up to date.
- Attitude towards student services is very positive and supportive by students, teachers, administration and parents.
- In our school achievement testing is occurring in a systematic program. A strong connection has been forged with the library. A strong connection has been forged with career programs.
- Teachers have been more accepting of modifications and adaptations.
- More in class support rather than pull out. Consistent LA has resulted in more Sr. students coming in for help. Liaison with feeder schools has resulted in immediate support for high risk grade 8's.
- The 1994-95 School Accreditation recommended a review of learning assistance for slow learner/low average ability students. A study/learning centre was established in 96/97. We are benefitting from the first year of a positive program.
- Teacher ownership. Program cooperation between LA and registering

teachers.

- More in-class support.
- Better record keeping practice. District ed-psych testing is clearer and more helpful.
- More acceptance of assistance in order to keep students more in regular classrooms.
- LA teacher working with children requiring help in a regular classroom setting.
- The Resource model allows LA to be provided in a team format.
- Involvement of LAT's in classrooms. SBT - collaborative consultation. Cooperative planning. Team teaching enhanced relative to specific classes.
- Flexibility, a place for some students to feel safe and "good" about themselves. School based team support.
- Team approach - more than one full time teaching positions in a student services role. CCW (TA's) assigned to schools for flexible support to many students and teachers. Built in consultation time (essential) - recognition of team building. Recognizes and builds on personnel strengths in a consultative and collaborative model.
- Considering the fact that in my school LA time has been halved this year (from .6 to .3) I have still been able to service at least some of our students. Our transition practices from elementary to Jr. high have become more streamlined (transition forms).
- We have a fairly good bank of materials accumulated.
- Professional development of LA's. Materials available have improved. Improved transition procedures. Increased contact with the Senior High LA for smooth transitions, consistency of LA between the schools. Students less reluctant to come to Learning Assistance. Improved relationship with district personnel, improved contacts.
- Transitional smoothness and Liaison between feeder schools, improved documentation of adjudication of prov. exams, greater contentment of students and parents, increased teacher awareness of special needs, image of LA has improved dramatically with most teaching staff, recognition of specific skills and characteristics of an LA teacher, improved connection between district personnel and school (more tangible), better documentation of students' needs, teacher inservice re: SBT adaptations and referral was very successful, stigma of LA has been reduced, course teachers have info about students at their fingertips, services are available to all students in school, improved reporting/tracking strategies for LA services expanded to include the needs of honor roll students, a "home base" has been established in the school with computer access.
- 'Phonological Processing' program for Kindergarden and Grade One students. Close working relationship between LA and 'Speech and Language' Pathologist. Variety and depth of assessment and remedial materials. Supportive relationship between LA's in the schools and Itinerant support staff. Increased professional development of LA's. Emphasis on a quality program.

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QUESTION 28 (LEARNING ASSISTANCE - EMERGING CHALLENGES)

SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES

- More kids/less time/more problems,fewer resources. Overloaded classroom teachers/direction and societal issues- violence, etc.
- Increased numbers of special needs students. Finding teaching space.
- Burden some paper work. School-Based Team demands. Increased number of students on wait-list. ESL factor. Lack of consultation time. Change in criteria for Resource Room qualifications.
- More kids less time. FAE, FAS.. more incidence; ADD; ADHA more incidence.
- Time and space in the school are limited. More children with needs seem to be in the school system. Fewer students qualify for S.L.D. so are put in L.A. More dysfunctional families.
- IEP completion takes inordinate amount of time. Inclusion of ESL (Intermediate and Advanced) flow into LA through classroom teacher (referral). Students who score too low on Psycho/Ed. assessment to qualify for Resource Room.
- Finding time to set up meetings and to meet. In all small schools, the S.B.T. is a very large portion of the staff, with so many other obligations gathering is a challenge.
- Increased societal/family issues which affect students - alcohol and drug affected students - incidence of abuse and eating disorders - poverty affecting learning - neglect (street socialization, low social skills, language deterioration - under exposure to print materials - overexposure to T.V. and violent materials. Cuts to Special Ed. staffing- trend towards "grant" funding while core funding is cut ! Great increase in "ADD/ADHD " students.
- Communication of effective approaches to other colleagues and school personnel.
- Paperwork, IEP's, meetings - Itinerants instead of fixed staff.
- Major cuts in teacher time; major cuts in funding for materials for students; major cuts in teaching assistant time; major cuts - almost the elimination of Learning Assistance time; using L.A. time for PREP for teachers.
- Finding the time to do the job properly - the more people involved the more time that is required.
- Record keeping, volume of new Ministry changes and documentation reading; financial restraint.
- You can make the job as simple or as complicated as you want. Effective communication. Time spent on I.E.P.'s and School Based Team Meetings.
- The number of students in need of Learning Assistance seems to be increasing while the budget cuts result in less LA teaching time.
- Much more record keeping and paper work - ' IEP's', graphing, etc. must be done resulting in less time to actually track each student. LA Teacher time in relation to student numbers is insufficient.
- Time constraints for meetings, collaboration and direct service, training of new staff, meeting parental input expectations, involving parents, coping with caseload, working with teachers who disagree with "inclusionary model ".
- Not enough time for low functioning students in individual classes- they need small group structure.
- Paperwork, increased need with less time to deliver.
- Combining learning assistance and resource room resources.
- Review dates are sometimes hard to achieve.

- More severe learning problems. A broader complexity of learning problems. Reduction in funding eliminates 'District funded' students who default into the L.A. category.
- Arguing against the erroneous assumption that students in French Immersion who require learning assistance should transfer to the English program. Balancing intellectual and emotional needs of students - increasing demand.
- Time management is a major concern. More students with behavioral concerns and other specific areas ADD, FAS SLD. Need to update assessment, learning and instructional strategies. Need for collaborative skills. Change to curriculum based help for intermediate students.
- Increasing number of behaviorally challenged students who are not identified. Increasing number of At-Risk students who require stay- in-school counselling. Increasing dependence of students on teachers who show that they care.
- Too much paperwork which detracts from direct services to students. Required meetings -parents need to attend - a phone call is more efficient and less threatening.
- More and more "serious needs" students.
- Financial squeeze affects staffing.
- More students, fewer teachers, more difficult home situations.
- The growing number of self-referrals from students experiencing a variety of learning difficulties (the challenge is in ensuring that all students requesting support are given attention - even though a waiting period might be necessary).
- The physical space over crowding.
- Cutting back of LAT's / shrinking budget. Lack of facilities (eg. up-dating of computers to a level commensurate with the rest of the school). Priorizing service delivery.
- Union contract language. Increased population. Higher expectations by parents and community to keep up with ministry criteria changes to meet student needs - lack of time ... need far more SSA time.
- Wider range of student needs. The more we pull students out - the greater the timetable challenges.
- To meet the needs of a more diverse student population, larger case- loads, fewer resources to work with, and not always feeling qualified to work with the more diverse challenges facing us.
- More time allocated to the program.
- Finding enough time to do all the paper work, set and attend meetings and develop and monitor student programs / progress.
- More ESL pupils. Cutbacks in LAC staffing. Cutbacks in other support services. Budget cuts in LAC resource materials. Ongoing changes in Ministry policies/procedures (letter grades, IEP's, special needs designations).
- Too much paper work.
- Sometimes weak academic skills of teaching assistants.
- Seem to be greater number of students requiring a block of LA and /or adaptions to their programs each year.
- How much to blend the services of Learning Assistance and special education. Being bound more and more to the LA room instead of getting into regular classes to provide assistance.
- Learning to deal with more students in less time. Parent demands exceed our allotted LAC time. Specific learning disabilities require more and more expertise and smaller groups of children to really remediate and to teach children how to function in the classroom despite their disabilities.
- More diverse needs particularly at the senior levels. It takes an increasing amount of experience to be a master of all subject areas at all levels.
- Students with more severe learning problems. Assessment tools need to be redesigned for children from other cultures (ESL students). An increasing

number of students needing help.

- The constant changing of personnel from year to year. Personnel not trained to deliver LA. The large number of different teachers each having one or two blocks. This year - the reduction of hours that LA will be offered.
- Not enough time to properly address needs . Trying to meet increasing parental demands with shrinking dollars. More learning problems in today's society.
- Requiring IEP's is possibly more taxing than it should be.
- Teaching 'border line low incidence'(intellectually) students who do not qualify for assistance especially with limited time and resources in a small school.
- More and more students require services to be successful, but there are fewer LA teachers.
- To meet the needs of low ability/low achieving students who will probably not graduate and there are no other programs in the district for these students.
- To meet the needs of students previously getting service from CELD program. What to do with students (ESL) who do not get direct service and are floundering in the classroom.
- What to do with severe behaviour students ? Preventing students from becoming "dependent" on the program. Funding cut backs - less support for Aides.
- Some students are wait-listed for LA support. There is not enough time for pull-out, as well as direct support by the LA teacher in the classroom. T.A. time is presently provided for in-class support. SBT meetings are not frequent enough (every second month).
- Lack of funding for TA's. Lack of support for the teachers with an integrated model. Class sizes get larger - hence more problems within the classes.
- Too many students for one person so 'designated' students require priority. Funding - we need more teaching assistants but funding is a problem.
- Cutting of LA time. Less time for students who would benefit from extra time (help for short periods); headache trying to schedule team meetings, trying to get specialists involved. Not enough time to deal with all the other problems (emotional, social, as well as academic).
- Getting teachers to refer academic support rather than behaviour problems.
- More behaviour problems, more transient students, less reading and math ability.
- Meeting the many and varied needs of the students; maintaining the necessary support staff from year to year; keeping up with Ministry paperwork and requirements; substantiating support provided to students to satisfy audit teams ... meeting their demands.
- Involving parents has continued to be a challenge. Providing enough support for some students.
- There has been an increase in the number of referrals by classroom teachers and parents expect more time per child.
- No staff assistant support in 97-98 ; no in-school gifted services; increasing ESL student numbers, with no provision for ESL service
- Large numbers of "needy" children; learning difficulties; discipline problems. Behavioral and emotional problems. Decreased school resources. Limited pre - school experiences and language development opportunities.
- Overwhelming paperwork. Caseload is too large.
- Caseload increase; follow through of LAC program in classroom, difficult with limited support,staff to provide enough help for serious LA problems while still collaborating with classroom teachers.
- Inner City students with limited background knowledge and language deficits present special challenges. Less parent support in Inner City Schools.
- Completing paper work without sacrificing direct service to students. Providing supplementary resources for classroom teacher use. Coordinating IEP meetings for 'High Incidence' students.

- The challenge is always to give service to all students who need it. Funding is needed to provide students with new materials and computers ... and programs for computers that are specific for LA students.
- The Area Resources Committee Work takes over 50% of my time
- from September - February and only a few students are serviced through this model. Trying to be knowledgeable enough about a student to rank prioritize them, ARC students get a lot of service. Designing individual interventions that can meet needs of many students.
- Dealing with funding cutbacks/less time spent on actually "working" with students.
- The designation criteria have changed - making it harder for kids to be designated for funding, so they end up in LA. Attempting to meet the needs of so many kids plus the paperwork with so little time.
- Not enough time for assessment; fitting services into master time table. Time and schedule parameters; lack of resources and staffing levels; increasing number of students requiring LA service.
- Increase in teacher referrals. The Reading Recovery Program (40%) has left less time for other classes.
- More paperwork and time!
- Too much paper work. So many children need extra help, children are more difficult to handle - more with ADD with or without hyperactivity being referred. Lack of parent participation/involvement. Cutbacks in funding.
- Teachers want you to take low groups all year. Discrepancies about Adapted/modified IEP's. Need a better definition of High Risk and Low/Slow kids. Children used to be grouped - Three groups in classes - low, average, high. No written IEP's were needed for 'low' group but programs were always adapted to meet their needs. Why the extra demand for written IEP's of late ?
- In general, our students are from low socio - economic homes and not ready for school (eg. language deprived). LAT works with all types of students and not just learning disabled.
- More students with more problems. Little time to remain current; little time to compile IEP's.
- Time considerations. Budgetary constraints - lack of student support /family support services has resulted in larger numbers of students at risk.
- Significantly increased need and numbers of students. Managing time constraints and IEP development. Language and cross cultural difficulties.
- Lower literacy level and math skill level.
- More mainstreamed 'ministry numbered students'. Meeting increased need with fewer resources.
- Too many students on waiting list as we cannot service all students. We deal with severe cases and have no time for kids who need short term intervention.
- Increase in paper work - referral from SBT for placement and testing. Decrease in ESL services and changes in Resource Room criteria have increased the caseload of LA. Most schools have LA teacher as SBT chairperson; coordination is time consuming.
- More paper work; planning meeting times; increased diagnostic abilities but not always increased ways of remediating; trying to make modifications for students in the classroom that are realistic and achievable; the general complexity and diversity of student needs and parent expectations.
- Time constraints; need for inservice to Teachers/LAT's. Lack of zonal support group meetings to share new materials and strategies. Cut- backs in Spec. Ed. (ie. LAT Resource Room; support workers). Closure of Special Intervention Classes; academic- behavioral, special needs.
- To provide adequate service for all needy students (time).
- Meeting the criteria/demands laid out by the ministry with regard to student having/obtaining a 'ministry number'. Paper work. Time management.

- Expanding caseloads; backlogs for assessment (Psycho Educational); more to do in less time; increase in students with both learning and behaviour needs; expanding role of LAT.
- Not enough time to provide service to all students needing it. We need a resource room.
- Cut backs by Ministry causing less LAC time allotted to us (.8 instead of 1); no more staff assistants; poor working conditions (LAC's often get stuck in poorly ventilated room/eg. former storage rooms). In our district, cut backs have resulted in decentralization, hence feeling of solidarity amongst LA teachers no longer exists. This affects professional development - morale. There is no longer anyone in charge so who can you ask for help? Because teacher aides have been done away with, there will be no one available to cover classes when the teachers need to attend the School Based Team meetings. Therefore these may well be phased out further reducing services to students at risk.
- Not enough support is available for a growing population of Severe Learning Disabled students... 1 resource aide for 22 SLD student in 6 classrooms.
- LA time is almost all going to SLD and LD students ... typical LA students are getting very little time.
- Meeting diverse needs of students scheduled for LA time: behaviour, social, emotional problems as well as academic. "Gray area" students.
- Increased numbers of needy students, often deficient in basic reading skills.
- Increased paper work. eg. IEP; internal and external audits, reporting practices eg. unable to assign letter grades in many cases. Dealing with LD's on report cards.
- Changes in criteria result in it being more difficult to have students fit categories eg. SLD, SBD. Low IQ (70-80) students - no category.... functional yet academically very needy.
- Trying to meet the needs of all classroom teachers with very little learning assistance time available.
- Introduction and increase of High Incidence students into LA caseloads has diluted service. Noted increases in ADD, ADHD, FAS, SB, SLD students; increase in students who are significantly below grade due to lack of intervention. Legal rights/obligations of parents. Lack of parenting skills.
- Much more paperwork with funding applications puts much more stress on teachers to spend many hours of their own time or else not work with the students.
- District services are shrinking proportionally to the need, so more workload will be 'down- loaded' to the LAC.
- More need for classroom teachers to assume responsibility for services to an increasing number of needy children.
- New materials for students to use in classroom. Who is to come to LAC for assistance (criteria) so the numbers are not too high. Ways to assist teachers with programs.
- Communicating with ESL parents and time to co-ordinate meeting schedules for all involved, especially interpreters.
- IEP requirement.
- Time for teacher collaboration and an emphasis on this. Identification of learning problems: slow learners - no service, LD students need more assistance (than you can give in this model) - how to sort these categories . . . Need good mentoring program for new LA teachers.
- Growing number of special needs students, extraordinary challenges; working with other agencies. Growing expectations of parents and teachers. Absorbing services cuts at district level (ie: counsellors, speech and language, OT/PT).
- Limited supplies and equipment. Set BC computer program. Need updating - site licences etc. (who should receive RR or LA services).

- The number of 'designated' students has mushroomed. The number of Special Ed. Assistants has decreased.
- Increasing demand for support.
- Having students attend classes. The " LA " role changing from LA to LA and Resource Room. Communication with many in house and outside services.
- More and more students with behaviour problems. Time and resources needed for successful implementation of IEP.
- Inability to meet contractual class size limitations due to special needs students. Discrimination against special needs students ... due to contractual limitations which restrict their entry to many classes.
- Less time being designated to LA; more ESL students; more 'grey area' students, more behavior challenges.
- Wider range of student needs.
- School district budget demands have affected our ability to offer the same service. There may be a larger range of students within one class. The philosophy of an integrated study centre (using gifted students as peer tutors, adapting materials to fit learning outcomes) is a challenge.
- The incredible amount of time needed for IEP development and meeting with parents and teachers. Amount of students needing support with diminishing resources.
- Other resources are becoming more scarce - ie. fewer students qualify for resource placement, occupational services cut.
- More identified learning problems (earlier). Less family home support. Overcrowding - we have no LA room or Resource Room.
- Increase of behaviour related problems.
- Higher caseloads, less parent support, less district resources.
- Ability of LA teacher and classroom teacher to be flexible and work together.
- To provide service in the face of overwhelming growth of paper work. This survey is a prime example.
- Gifted programming; public expectations; numbers in programme; cutting of LAT time; secretarial needs and expectations.
- Have to move out of LA room for two days while music class takes place. Resource materials are not close at hand.
- Dropped Peer Tutors and Enrichment programmes. Wasted time moving to another location. Location not quiet for my distractible students.
- Documentation - assessments, IEP's, reporting. Time for coordinating team meetings - phone calls, follow-up.
- Reduced time; increased paper work; increased caseload; expectations of 'miracles'; lack of continuity of program because of reduced time - 3 days per week; lack of training for TA's; keeping up with technology and computer programs; connecting parent expectations and child's needs and abilities.
- The main challenge is to service the needs of a growing school population with a decrease in funding reflected by this year's decrease in LA time from 0.6 to 0.3 FTE with an identical or larger caseload for LA. Also, the challenge can be to get parents to accept the time offered.
- Getting other teachers to understand the LA position. The numbers of students requiring learning assistance has increased drastically.
- Cutbacks to special services. I am very worried about how many students need help and that many may not receive it. Parent involvement. Elimination of ESL services. Continued training for LA's.
- Number of student requests are increasing (compared over yr); disconnectedness of Teaching Assistants (training and daily direction); expanding breadth of service (ie. ESL cuts), increasing number of contacts, diagnostic services (psychological/educational), helping students understand their strengths/weaknesses, finding suitably trained T.O.C. when the need arises, finding appropriate personnel to work in LA; budgetary cutbacks; finding appropriate secondary inservice; overcoming the "programmed

nature" of the job - yes we do have homework - yes, it does require more than one person. . . - especially from library staff and specific teachers both in and out of our school. Connecting parents' expectations with students needs and desires; explaining specialized programs; parental expectations to "fix" their child.

- Sorting the funding and identification groupings to make them more 'real' for humans. Paperwork and organization - number of services needed - whether limited staffing.
- Labelling students for funding purposes; repeating assessments at this level for educating teachers to know when to refer.

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QUESTION 29 (ENHANCING OR IMPROVING LEARNING ASSISTANCE SERVICE DELIVERY).

SUMMARY OF ENHANCEMENTS / SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

- IEP's only for designated students...use learning contracts, etc.
- More funding - we're stretched to the limit.
- Providing T.A. for Learning Assistance. Eliminate IEP for majority of students; Reduce caseload of L.A.; Budget for resources.
- Less reports/ surveys and IEP's would result in more teacher time.
- Reduce the amount of paperwork (means more time to work with kids). Have L.A. teachers based in only one school - more time for collaboration.
- Underlined words (" within existing resources ") limit what we would say. More time is needed because caseload frequently exceeds the .6 allotment for our LA teacher. For example, 2 families, three kids each, arrived during year and all changed LA delivery model drastically - all 6 kids very needy.
- One suggestion - in some cases (especially if families are in regular contact with the school) after original IEP mtg., subsequent contact could be through informal mtgs. and telephone.
- We are stretched as thin as we can be - resources must be increased ! Additional staffing. Increase special education funding ! Update incidence research on high incidence category. (ie., S.L.O.) Identify (ie. fund) specifically for FAS/FAE.
- More parent involvement, more motivated teachers, more resources (eg. computers), more grade-level appropriate texts.
- By moving to a school-based resource room format as opposed to itinerant specialists.
- More time for one school - combine LA and SLD - attach a teacher assistant and free up the school to make a more flexible identification of children who need service.
- Use technology (computers) for all the record-keeping administrative portions of the job to release more time for direct instruction.
- We feel that we are doing a good job. But we are very well resourced. All schools should have the kind of support that we have !
- Allow school autonomy. Decrease IEP planning meetings required for regular remedial L.A. students.
- I'm doing such a great job now, I can't imagine improving upon my performance.
- We need more L.A. to meet the growing numbers of students who require L.A.
- Early identification and prevention in K - 12. Early screening for problems. Classroom teacher inservice to help identify problems. Consultation time is needed to meet with teachers.
- Improving instruction practices to better meet diverse needs through more in-class service. Enhance reporting to parents.
- More funding for better reading materials.
- Aren't enough existing resources.
- Not that we can see within existing resources.
- More inservice for L.A. teachers outlining strategies for effective teaching. Use of specialists rather than teachers who are more or less ' tutorial students '.
- Technology to network information to teachers/other specialists consultants.

More L.A. teachers to share the increased burden of more students shut out of other funded programs.

- Better availability of appropriate French Immersion remedial materials. More time for resource personnel allocation.
- Stream students.
- Must have an administrator who is willing to use a collaborative model in supporting LAC change to meet student needs first. Should be part of team accessing all support services including parents (in school and out) that could meet children's needs. Must decide as a team of all resource people plus student to meet student needs in best way for student.
- To effectively provide collaborative service work in individual classes we would need more manpower.
- The timetable could be altered in order for short support blocks be offered to students throughout the year.
- Teacher preparation programs should prepare teachers for the workplace reality of special needs students in the classroom. . Within the present limitations we see no way to enhance or improve service.
- The issue of improving service delivery is addressed on a regular basis (weekly LAC meeting, weekly Spec. Ed. Team meetings, weekly School-Based Team meetings as well as meetings with district staff Spec. Ed. personnel).
- More flexibility in union contract language. Continue teacher pro-d.
- More inservice for students with emotional and behavioral needs, ESL background... and more time needs to be allotted for consultation and planning within school hours. How do we help teachers meet the needs of special needs students, and full integration within the classroom when every year the cuts, especially to aide support, are more severe ? This was promised with integration. Classroom teachers need more help !
- More time allocated to the program.
- Reduce amount of change at Ministry level to LAC policies ,procedures, funding etc. Otherwise it can't be improved.
- More blending with special education which would provide some T.A. time.
- Not having to do an IEP on students whose needs are not great enough to warrant adaptations or modifications in their regular classes.
- Making sure all LAC teachers are properly trained and offered further professional development in new methodologies. Collaboration between classroom teachers and LAC teacher needs to continue to be encouraged and facilitated. Less paperwork ie. lengthy IEP's on every child seen 25 hours or more. Parents need not be involved in development of IEP's.
- At the secondary level have LA teachers working in pairs so that all subject areas are covered adequately and also this allows one to keep the center open while the other is in consultation or in the classroom. Tell classroom teachers its OK if they don't cover the entire curriculum with all students. They can pass them anyway. Make Grade 12 Final Exams process oriented rather than content oriented in all subject areas.
- Don't see how things can be improved without additional resources.
- Personnel consistency. Training of interested teachers.
- Internal program evaluation, more group instruction, more emphasis on early intervention.
- Perhaps a minimum allocation should be established for all schools. Clearly .1 (2 1/2 hr. /wk.) is insufficient to do an adequate job. I have done more than .1 but had to focus my time mostly on direct instruction. However, even during this time there were many interruptions.
- We have maximized our time and resources.
- We need more resources ! Teacher time. Possible TA's assigned to Learning Assistance. Move to "Resource Room Model" where all Special Programs would work together.

- More frequent SBT meetings (ie. one per month).
- More LA time and more support for the classroom teacher especially TA's and daily counselling services. If all problems could be addressed and "nipped in the bud" at the elementary level there would be fewer problems later on.
- The biggest problem is the finances - so within existing resources - it can't be improved.
- Depends on school and how the staff want or wish to have the LA time distributed.
- Develop pre- and post-testing within the four core departments.
- This is an 'oxymoron'.
- Reducing the paperwork would allow teachers to teach. With amalgamation it does not seem likely existing resources will be maintained !
- Demands by the Ministry for accountability around funding require the time of those who could be better utilized in other endeavours.
- Change LA rooms from basement to more central location, proper staffing for primary ESL and intermediate ESL to reduce LAC being used for ESL support. School Based Team believes that provision of good LAC services reduces numbers of students who become severe LD and other low incidence categories eg. behavioral. Without this service more students will develop into serious learning and behavior problems.
- I do not see "Learning Assistance" as a unique BC program. I have taught in Ontario where a similar service is call "the Resource Room"; and with Dept. of National Defence in Europe with teachers from across Canada all of whom were familiar with this service, though only in New Brunswick was it called "Learning Assistance" as in BC.
- Less paperwork - IEP's for LA students are not needed. Resource Rooms if teacher assistant time continues to decrease. Support for professional development, materials and updating testing materials.
- More time for LA teacher. More TA support.
- Ensure that all LA teachers have the necessary training and are motivated to do the job. Ensure that the LAC positions are maintained and their essential service recognized (eg. a substitute provided for LAC teachers' absences and provision of secretarial support).
- Find alternatives to the amount of record keeping. Providing time for both LA and classroom teacher to collaborate around setting of student goals.
- I feel there is a real need for short term, intense LA for students having difficulty in specific areas but don't normally qualify for LA programs. I think short interventions for these students would pay off and limit some of the longer term interventions, needed later, for some students.
- Give the LAT designated computer time and training. Allow parent volunteers to be used again for drill work, etc. Give the LAT designated time-typing, faxing, filing, carding, books, shelving materials.
- Focus less on contract and referral procedures - more on kid's needs.
- We suggest that the needs of "The Child" be put before the needs of "the system". Back off on some of the "paper" - so more time can be spent with children.
- Classroom teachers assuming greater responsibility for learning needs of each child. Inservice and training for classroom teachers. increase allocation of Sp. Ed. teaching time.
- Using a resource team approach that still allows for direct instruction. More guidance and support from the District Level.
- Less paperwork, less need for meetings.
- Do not cut back LA time. Decrease amount of documentation needed. Produce placement tests and materials to go with Language Arts and Math I.R.P.'s. We need B.C. diagnostic material for reading (like Alberta's) and math.
- Move into the classroom on a needed basis. Use of computer technology to

be maximized. Use LAC for a specific aspects of students' core subjects.

- S.B.T. chair/coordinators need to be acknowledged and given extra time. LA not be viewed as a "dumping ground". Staffs and administrators be given inservice on strategies for different learners. LA needs to be consultative and collaborative within district and school. No student should receive support from ESL and LA, from SLD and LA, and from MD and LA - no duplication of support.
- Allow a comprehensive, goal oriented course description to replace the IEP for non-designated students.
- Teachers required to take course-work concerning students with Learning Difficulties.
- We have a Volunteer Community Readers Program which runs twice a year to help kids with reading.
- Within our district and in a tiny school the fragmentation of ESL, LA, Resource Room allocations makes consultation/articulation nearly impossible (Contractual issues). Given the same resources (0.3, + 0.4 + 0.1) FTE, in the person of one body, this would be more effective.
- Within the existing circumstance LAT and Teachers are doing the best they can. Programs always are under revision; some flexibility at the school level is desirable.
- We are hoping to expand the notion of assigning case management to specific personnel: LA's, Principal, Teacher, etc. Thereby spreading the work load and enhancing/monitoring the IEP.
- Wouldn't we have already done that ???
- More resources, additional staffing.
- Within existing resources no change could be made.
- Explore the possibilities for computer assisted learning. Secretarial, permanent para-professional support needed to help with paperwork, record-keeping demands.
- Secretarial time; reduced paperwork requirements; provide technological support eg. Alpha Smart Keyboards, laptops; designated collaboration time.
- More time for LA and more money for supplies.
- We are funded at 4% of school population - we service 20% of pop. We have done what we can - we do not feel it could be enhanced or improved under current funding - in fact we will have difficulty maintaining the quality and quantity of service.
- Less paperwork expected by district level and ministry level.
- Change in requirement for IEP's. A statement of general goals and direction - a form of "preview" - for each child outlining the support given, rather than the current document.
- Increased LAC budget (reallocate from other sources); common criteria for service delivery.
- Less time and emphasis on formal paperwork so that more time can be given to direct instruction.
- We are doing the best we can with what we have.
- More curriculum adaptation; more LA in the classroom but needs more staffing; make sure LA teachers have varied backgrounds in Primary/Intermediate and good curriculum knowledge.
- Providing more external support for specialized areas to schools.
- Present staff are working to the best of their ability and resources. Without further resources, little more can be done.
- Use of a computer program like "Plato". The access to cablevision (Knowledge Network). Have parent connection days once a month.
- More opportunities to share strategies. Teachers must be qualified.
- Increase time - CEA attached to LA.
- Funding for supplies: special readers, workbooks and educational devices eg. games for reading and phonics. Opportunities for teachers to observe and

meet with LA Teachers from other schools (eg. meeting once a month).

- We need to be sure that all students have IEP's in order to access all the services available.
- Continue ' blended role '...resource approach.
- Ensure 1 LA per school rather than % only... eg., 1 per school (plus percentage if greater need established) or 1 per school plus additional TA support as needs require.
- We are always changing the service delivery model as the needs of the groups change.
- Increase the number of hours needed before an IEP is required. More release time for Reading Recovery - this program does work and will pay great dividends down the road as fewer students will require individualized assistance with reading.
- By allowing School Based Team more flexibility in determining what students receive extra support and what that support will entail (ie. who should be on Resource Room caseload, who should receive T.A. support etc).
- Leave us alone to do our work, stop tinkering, changing. Redeploy all Ministry staff to the field to provide direct service.
- If we knew we would be doing it. Should be a reinstatement of district coordinator.
- LA should have its own room all the time - time wasted moving; more time to work with students. Phone should be accessible to contact parents. Time to organize Peer Tutors and Enrichment activities.
- Maintain a level of service that recognizes the diversity of learners in each school .. school based . . district based. Ongoing process of refining roles and responsibilities of personnel, policies and procedures that are flexible and realistic and current (District Leadership). This is necessary for successful Inclusive Education!!
- Continued professional development and contact with other LA's. Training for teachers to help support SLD students in the classroom.
- Continue with professional development. This is very important. Continue contact with other LA's and their programs across the province. More resources. Inservice targeted to classroom teachers. Strategies to cope and support students that have sprcial needs.
- Resources, inservice, instructional strategies for classroom teachers so that they can be with all of their students. Improved notice for audits, surveys, etc. We are very busy - this is the 3rd. "investigative" activity we've had in 3 years and it is very time consuming to complete. The Ministry needs to reduce the number of requests of this nature.
- Improved documentation of adjudication needs, IEP's etc. Little or no "pull out" - so that students don't miss instruction in class. Delivery model that is meeting more needs than previously.
- Early identification/diagnosis (in secondary years). Extensive evaluation of student files. Improved connection between counsellors and LA. Greater focus on inclusion and meeting students needs.
- Plan for some meeting time in the school day so not all meetings are before/at noon/or after school. Allow some resource budget at the school level to book perhaps 2 - Teacher On Call days a year to cover teachers for year end meetings, etc.
- List of known resources that would be beneficial - district/provincial for adapting/modifying programs.
- I would like to see a return to more LA inservice to help us be more efficient and knowledgeable in our jobs. Also, our number of TA's continue to increase in all schools and there has been no increase in time given to LA's or other teachers to monitor or give help/guidance/training to TA's. More inservice is needed for classroom teachers as well - to help them deal with all the challenges in their classrooms.